

Public Voices IV(2)

Introduction

This issue is an international effort that examines bureaucratic images in motion pictures from the United States, the former Soviet Union, Western Europe, the Middle East, India and Latin America. Contributions are by academics who either live in particular countries/regions or who have spent significant portions of their lives in the area they are writing about.

Our goal in this issue is to provide a general overview of images (and/or the development of images) of public servants in the movies over many decades. Crosscutting themes include:

- specific images of a public agency or its management (e.g., persistence of certain type of images of an official);

- the variety of images in the body of work of important actors or directors (e.g., bureaucratic portrayals by certain actors or images in the films of particular directors);

- the portrayal of a certain type of agency in the movies (e.g., the police);

- comparisons of different images (e.g., images of crooked officials and martyrs for justice) or concepts (e.g. different approaches to administrative discretion).

No medium is more powerful than the cinema. The contributors to this issue identify at least three functions of that power (which is, of course, shared with other media such as television and newspapers). First, images of the bureaucrats are almost uniformly negative. Second, directors and actors are communicating some sense of social injustice, and implicit agendas for social reform. Third, the movies also communicate powerful models of management, many of which are dysfunctional and have been discredited by social science research, but that nevertheless persist in the daily behaviors of our public servants.

Vatche Gabrielyan
Marc Holzer

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by

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Abstract

This paper briefly summarizes evidence for the influence of popular films on public perception of government and on public policy. Two films examined through the lens of public administration, and the lessons they teach about public administration, are exposed. One film, *Ghostbusters* conveys a strongly negative image, and the other, *A Thousand Heroes* a strongly positive message. Only *Ghostbusters* was and remains popular and profitable. Public information efforts by government and the public administration community have been limited or reactive. The authors argue for the increased support for public information initiatives such as those of the Public Employees Roundtable (PER) and the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA).

Public Administration at the Movies

Public Voices, in its call for movie reviews, notes: "we have within our collective memories hundreds of films that bear upon public policy and administration ..." (Shafritz, 1996, p.129). The same call for movie reviews observes that movies have not yet been looked at in this light. Dwight Waldo has mentioned that movies teach us much of what we know collectively about government and public administration. Waldo's view is supported indirectly by the fact that cable television runs as a regular show "Movies In Time," facilitated by Mr. Sander Vanocur. In that show, expert historians and anthropologists critique depictions of the past by popular films. The existence of the show suggests experts and scholars acknowledge that films teach history, and that the history lessons in films are taken seriously by enough viewers to constitute a market for critique.

The efficacy of films in influencing ways the public thinks about government, and in building or undermining popular support for government actions, has long been accepted. This acceptance was particularly obvious before and during World War II. How do films shape current thinking about government and the performance of government services? Just as Moore and Henighan (1996) analyze charter documents and legislation to identify performance expectations of public service organizations, the authors analyze films to reveal performance expectations of government. The two films analyzed are in the author's areas of specialization: public management and aviation management.

Films Teach Public Administration

The use of film in teaching is well established; however, its impact on public administration in America extends far beyond the classroom. Howard McCurdy (1995) argues in Public Administration Review that fiction enters "the public consciousness or popular culture" and becomes "part of the cognitive base for making decisions about public policy and administration" (p. 499). McCurdy's study demonstrates fiction affecting the outcomes of established historic cases of policy making. De-institutionalization of the mentally ill followed years of artistic depiction of mental institutions as cruel prisons, e.g., Kesey's 1962 novel/play/movie, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Approval of enormous government expenditure for a manned U.S. Space Program (NASA) flowed from a marriage of the nuclear holocaust literature of the 1950's with traditional space travel fiction. After this marriage, U.S. space policy was transformed from a low-budget, in-house effort to develop robotic exploration, into a hugely expensive, contracted-out race to put a man on the moon.

In addition to influencing administrative method by way of influencing substantive policy, current reforms of the National Partnership Review (NPR) suggest fiction may influence the administrative method directly. McCurdy points out empirical evidence of efficacy of the NPR type of reforms is mixed, at best. He attributes the wide acceptance of NPR reforms to American cultural myths which date from at least the 1826 publication of James Fennimore Cooper's popular novel Last of the Mohicans. Its themes of personal independence and anti-institutionalism have been touchstones of American fiction from Mark Twain, through John Wayne, to *Dirty Harry*.

The work of many other scholars supports McCurdy's view of the power of fiction to shape public perception. Virginia Ingersoll and Guy Adams' (1992) analysis of images of organization in 29 American children's stories explains how a group of symbolic images dispersed in culture can portray an aspect of life so continually and compellingly that, in combination, the symbols are thought of as reality, or at the very least, what reality should be (1992). Jay White and Guy Adams (1994), probing the nature of knowledge creation through research, conclude our dominant combination of symbols (i.e., technical rationality) inhibits other ways of thinking or acting. In his study of documentary cinema, Bill Nichols (1994), a professor of cinema studies, states:

We hunger for news from the [complex] world around us but desire it in the form of narratives, stories that make meaning.... Stories offer structure; they organize and order the flux of events; they confer meaning and value.... Inevitably, the distinction between fact and fiction blurs when claims about reality get cast as narratives (p. ix)

McCurdy endorses Charles Goodsell's (1985) view that fiction creates experiences for individuals as vivid as encounters with real bureaucrats and more exasperating than reality. Fox and Miller (1995) refer to a "thinning of reality" as we move away from shared standards; human learning and experience take place more and more in relation to epiphenomena, and less in relation to lifeworld phenomena (p.56). Goodsell makes a strong case for the almost "inverse contradiction" between the facts of government performance and the popular conceptualization (p. 144) Fox and Miller ask, "Can the real be distinguished from the virtual?" (p. 46).

Some federal government agencies explicitly accept the impact of films on public perceptions, and, presumably appreciate the relevance of public perceptions to policy. An article in Government Executive, called “Feds on Film,” describes extensive, often proactive, cooperation of federal government agencies with Hollywood (Stainburn, 1997).

We argue that the following ‘lessons’ from the movies suggest government film efforts should go beyond cooperation with Hollywood initiatives. Independent public information initiatives such as those led by the Public Employees Roundtable (PER) and the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) deserve greater support and priority.

Lessons In Public Personnel Administration From *Ghostbusters*

The pivotal event of *Ghostbusters* (1984) is a catastrophic explosion of negative ectoplasmic energy (i.e., destructive ghosts) into modern New York City. The explosion is triggered by the actions of Wallace Peck, a Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Official. Peck is motivated to act by his unsupported assumptions that the entrepreneurial Ghostbusters (played by popular comedians Dan Ackroyd, Bill Murray, and Harold Ramis) are greedy frauds. He explicitly seeks revenge against Bill Murray's character who has ‘insulted’ Peck. Peck uses the powers of his office to obtain court orders to ‘cease and desist all commerce,’ for ‘seizure of premises and property,’ for ‘entry and inspection,’ and, key to the explosion, for shutting off electric power due to ‘use of a public utility for unlicensed waste handling.’ The explosion places the New Yorkers in jeopardy.

Peck could be considered a ‘worst case’ example of Down's ‘zealot.’ Peck takes a broad view of his role to protect the public--stretching his environmental mandate to include commercial fraud. Peck does not believe in ghosts; he thinks the Ghostbusters defraud the public by taking money for removing ghosts that never existed. On a psychological level, his inappropriate agitation suggests his personal beliefs are threatened by the groundswell of reports of spectral activity. Peck never yields an inch, even when the lives of millions of New Yorkers are threatened. Wallace Peck slips into the collective unconscious wrapped in a funny, exciting, fast-paced adventure story with a happy ending.

Peck may cast a shadow as issues of the Friedrich-Finer variety are debated, particularly in regard to greater discretion for public officials. *Ghostbusters* includes many other lessons about public management. The outcomes of government's much-lauded, expensive affirmative action initiatives resonate in the public library. An older, white female librarian patiently sorts and stacks books, the library director is white, male, and thirty-something. Later, the film depicts the ease with which private employers recruit outstanding minorities. Ernie Hudson, an African American, walks into an address listed in the ‘help wanted’ section of the newspaper, and is added to the Ghostbusters' staff after a five minute conversation with their secretary. No expensive recruitment trips, no cumbersome personnel procedures or paperwork, no background check, no ceilings, no reports. The film suggests government diversity programs are ineffective, and government personnel ‘red tape’ is superfluous.

The public university is depicted as a hierarchy where students matter little, and unconventional ideas and faculty are unwelcome. The dean gleefully ‘fired’ all three

Ghostbusters by encouraging the Regents to cancel their funding. In the Dean's view, their science was 'bad science.' The Ghostbusters were fired and evicted from their laboratory just at the time when their 'scientific' but unconventional discovery was the only thing that could save New York City from calamity. Fortunately, the character played by Bill Murray was an 'entrepreneur'. Under his leadership, the Ghostbusters took out a loan and went into private business. The wisdom of the marketplace prevailed, and the Ghostbusters' service became sufficiently well-known to be called upon by the Mayor at the city's time of need. The subtext of this endearing chapter is summarized in Dan Ackroyd's lament protesting Bill Murray's idea of going into business:

"Personally, I liked the university. They gave us money and facilities. We didn't have to produce anything. You'd never been out of college. You don't know what it's like out there. I've worked in the private sector. They expect results."
(*Ghostbusters*, 1984)

The *Ghostbusters* commentary on public administration extends beyond the federal government and university to the municipal level of government. The city police department is shown to be effective and pragmatic at the street level, but helpless as a bureaucracy in the face of a novel threat too big to handle as a situational imperative. The mayor makes decisions about life and death issues affecting millions of people on the basis of potential votes. A subtext of the film is expressed in the lyrics of its hit music score, "Who you gonna call?" ... after absorbing these lessons, it probably won't be 'the government.' (*Ghostbusters*, 1984)

Lessons in Aviation Safety from *A Thousand Heroes*

The media and film industry often portray a bleak picture of our nation's airspace system. The result is a 'sky is falling' image leaving the traveling public to wonder whether our aviation system is airworthy. Aviation crises on the big screen are not uncommon, particularly in the genre of action films. In many cases, a crisis occurs and the people charged with the responsibility of dealing with that crisis are depicted as ill-prepared and at a loss for how to manage the event. This theme is consistent in most movies depicting an airplane emergency such as *Air Force One*, *Turbulence*, *Passenger 57*, *Die Hard II*, and *Airplane*.

After some searching, one movie was located which supports a 'rival hypothesis;' our airspace system is not only safe, but crisis management teams exist that are very well prepared to deal with disaster. The film *A Thousand Heroes* is based on the actual events surrounding the crash of United Airlines Flight 232, the DC-10 that crashed in Sioux City, Iowa. The movie shows how a multi-organizational, multi-jurisdictional disaster relief team can be created and can work effectively at times of turmoil. The United 232 disaster is an outstanding example of teamwork at all levels, from the flight crew and air traffic controllers to the hospitals, fire units, and air national guard personnel.

Most people recall the fiery image of a DC-10 spilling end over end down the runway and in the cornfields at Sioux City. United 232, with 296 persons on board, was en route from Denver to Chicago on July 19, 1989 when it encountered catastrophic engine failure of the number two engine. The explosion of the engine severed the hydraulic lines, leaving the crew members with almost no control of the aircraft. The crew managed to keep the crippled aircraft airborne for almost 40 minutes in what is now referred to as "an excellent example of effectively using all of your available resources"

(Krause, 1995, p. 109). The world was exposed to the crash footage from this fateful day, but few were exposed to the outstanding performance of a well-managed disaster team that made the difference between life and death for many travelers that day.

The movie, *A Thousand Heroes*, gives viewers a look not only at how the flight crew worked so well together, but also provides an inside view of how the crisis was managed by the Sioux City disaster relief team. The tasks for crisis managers are generally defined as four stages of crisis management:

1. Mitigation/Prevention: steps to prevent a crisis and plans to alleviate the impact of the event once it has occurred.
2. Preparedness: developing emergency plans, warning systems, emergency communications, and training.
3. Response: search and rescue operations, evacuations, and medical assistance
4. Recovery: activities to restore operations and return life to normal. (Clary, 1985, p.20; McLoughlin, 1985, p. 166).

Examples of the four stages of crisis management can be seen in the film and are summarized below:

1. Mitigation/Prevention: To alleviate the impact of a disaster, Gray Brown, head of disaster relief for Sioux City, invited those with key roles to participate on a disaster relief team. The purpose was to coordinate rescue efforts with emphasis on rescue and treatment of victims and prevention of further loss of life or property.
2. Preparedness: A mock disaster drill was conducted (approximately a year prior to the crash). The drill, a simulated airplane crash complete with victims and an unexpected explosion, provided a training opportunity for the team. A communications network was established so that information could be funneled through a central location and distributed as necessary.
3. Response: The movie tracks in great detail the response of the Sioux City team to the crash of Flight 232. The coordinated, well managed efforts of many organizations from a three state area resulted in the rescue and evacuation of all critically injured passengers in less than one hour.
4. Recovery: In an effort to restore operations, the team secured the crash site until the investigation unit took over. Counselors were also brought in to work with those involved in the 232 disaster.

The Sioux City disaster provides public managers, particularly in the transportation field, with an excellent example of crisis management in action. The movie tracks the development of the disaster relief team, problems encountered such as turf wars and power plays which become obvious during a mock disaster drill, and lessons learned from training. The training drill and subsequent debriefing provided the team the opportunity to discuss problems encountered and make improvements to emergency plans. Two significant lessons were learned during training. First, a key person, the fire chief, sent a clear message that he did not agree with Gary Brown's approach to crisis management. He suspected Brown was out to make a name for himself and was politically motivated. Through further communications between Brown and the fire chief,

the two found some common ground and were able to work together. The second important lesson was that key groups who could contribute to the team had not been included. As a result of these two lessons, improvements were made to the team and emergency plans prior to the crash of Flight 232.

When United 232 crashed at Sioux City Airport, a team that was well-organized, prepared and had an effective communication network was waiting for them. The response recovery, depicted in detail in the movie, proved that a multi-organizational team could be created and managed in order to effectively respond to a disaster. The Sioux City disaster relief team was recognized for their outstanding performance following the 232 crash and became a model for airport crisis management programs around the world. The film presents their story of effective disaster response, which resulted in 185 lives saved (Krause, 1996, p. 347). Despite a well known cast of stars, including Charlton Heston, the film did not achieve popular success. Positive images of government seem harder to sell and positive portrayals of aviation safety in the movies are, unfortunately, uncommon.

Goodsell (1985) reminds us of the dangers of creating public myths regarding bureaucratic performance. "Americans have worked themselves into a state of believing - - at a generalized level of conceptualization -- that their government does not perform" (Goodsell, 1985, 144). Hollywood has played a major role in contributing to such myths. The lessons for public administrators are that popular films may enhance the public's negative perception of bureaucratic performance. The public administration community should become more sensitive to these portrayals and how they influence public perception. Additional research could examine how such portrayals influence public officials' views of themselves and each other and consequences for performance.

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'Just Doin' My Job'

by
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It seems the bureaucracy influences workers from the first day they set foot on its turf. New hires are socialized to the culture of the workplace by those who have clear messages to send about expectations regarding both quality and quantity of work. Perhaps more importantly, the current bureaucrats model through example exactly how the tasks are to be performed, and what the prevailing attitudes are concerning not only the tasks, but also the players in the system. New employees see a sometimes subtle, but ever present, expression of who deserves respect and why; who belongs where on the stratification system; and how the employee can mesh into the prevailing system without alienating those whose support is desirable and may be needed. As the socialization process progresses, there are rites of passage and time milestones that must be passed through before various levels of acceptance are conferred on new hires. Eventually a comfort level is reached by employees who become part of the prevailing culture of the workplace.

In addition to the messages gleaned from fellow bureaucrats, training is received from a sense of expectation taken into the workplace by the new hire. Ideas about how to behave are transmitted through agents of socialization in addition to fellow workers. One such notable agent is the media. Images transmitted throughout culture manifest socially-constructed instructions as to how to best serve in whatever position is sought. Many children have never come in contact with an attorney or an emergency-room physician, yet nearly all children can articulate what those jobs entail, and can even imitate the roles. Thus, to argue that many of the specifics of given jobs, as well as the value systems that underlie task management are socially constructed, seems perfectly reasonable. Should that be cause for concern? No level of the bureaucracy seems immune from these socialization factors -- it is as likely that the U.S. Attorney General operates under a veil of unspoken norms and values as the correctional officer in a prison.

Perhaps because it is easier to subjugate those who are already subjugated by society, or perhaps because there is a sense of "we" versus "they" which develops as Phillip Zimbardo's research suggests (Zimbardo, 1972:4-8), correctional officers internalize a value system which clearly perpetuates the stratification system through its core values. Among those is the value that justice is what the courts has decided it is, and that it is the "job" of the correctional facility and its employees to carry it out. Another value is that those who have been through the system deserve their punishment, and that even if it seems unfair the state has spoken and the punishment must be meted out. Prison officials are quick to admit their facilities are full of people whose numbers are drawn from the ranks of the lower classes. Although there is clear evidence crime occurs at all levels of the stratification system, those most likely to be reported and officially processed are the least powerful in society. Even where atrocious crimes occur, the chances of successful arrest and conviction are much greater if the accused is poor. And

once convicted, society does not want to revisit the crime or the criminal, particularly when it is politically unpopular to do so. Often the system does not seem to stand for what is just or right, even to the employees who, in part, define that very system.

Two recent films, *The Chamber* (1996), and *Dead Man Walking* (1996), each contribute unique insights into bureaucratic socialization as they traverse the work world of prison personnel charged with the implementation of society's ultimate punishment. *Dead Man Walking* is a complex examination of the issues related to the death penalty as it is currently applied in contemporary American society, and *The Chamber* explores the relationship of a young attorney

and his death-row client (who is also his grandfather). But even as the viewer is forced to confront specific aspects of the death penalty (e.g., the horrors of the crimes that brought the condemned men to trial, the disparity of application of the ultimate punishment in the U.S., and the human desire for vengeance that drives the survivors and the politicians to push forward), the viewer is simultaneously confronted with yet another reality of the death penalty. The viewer sees the prison officers and wardens charged with carrying it out in the context of the work-a-day world of the bureaucrat. Taking the life of another, even when it is legally sanctioned and socially justified, is an enormous task to add to anyone's job description. The ease with which that is carried out, even given slight reservations by the staff of bureaucrats, causes (or perhaps should cause) the viewer to take pause for a brief moment and consider the factors that have led to the social construction of that particular reality.

In the 1960's, Stanley Milgram conducted a set of experiments at Yale University designed to test how far his subjects would go to inflict punishment when directed by authority figures to do so. He was surprised to find a majority of subjects inflicted pain, many to the point of inflicting serious bodily harm or death (Milgram 1963:371-378). The subjects of those experiments were volunteers, and were not coerced by the power of a paid position. They were merely influenced by the power of social conditioning to obey authority. His experiments were begun in an effort to understand blind obedience to irrational leadership such as Hitler's, but his findings demonstrate how powerful authority can be in the determination of human behavior. In both films, *The Chamber* and *Dead Man Walking*, the correctional officers expressed, even subtly, the strength of that power of conditioning, even in the face of positive personal feelings toward the offenders. There was never any doubt the employees would carry out the mission. Even as the warden in *The Chamber* was plagued with stress-related illness, and admitted he could not endure another execution prior to his retirement, another was willing and even anxious to take his place. The ex-military officer chosen from the ranks of the other prison administrators to attend to the details of carrying out the penalty attended to the rites of the execution with care and conscientiousness. He reported regularly, taking great pride in his achievements as the final hour drew near. Likewise, one viewing the final hours of the condemned killer in *Dead Man Walking* is haunted by the memory of the guard's mundane words as they walked down that final corridor: "dead man walking," announced sturdily, yet matter-of-factly.

The socialization process is strong indeed, and public employees clearly are expected to perform their tasks without undue analysis or torturous concern. Yet if the media plays such a strong role in the social definition of the way tasks are performed, and

in the formation of attitudes toward the work that is done, is there an obligation on its part to precipitate some critical thinking? It may be considered somewhat disconcerting that the media helps perpetuate a nonchalance concerning grave issues such as the taking of a human life. Whether one is opposed to the state taking the life of another to exact punishment or in agreement with it, none should take it lightly. Again the question of whether the media steers or merely reflects public opinion becomes tantamount: when the portrayal of public employment interfaces with the definition of public policy, the public may be obligated to stay tuned, to watch carefully, and to tread lightly.

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**Organization Development in Hollywood War Movies:
from *The Sands of Iwo Jima* to *G. I. Jane***

by
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Demi Moore is the new John Wayne. In the 1997 film *G.I. Jane* she takes a disparate group of would-be Navy SEALs (for sea-air-land teams) and forges them into a competent combat team -- just in time to see "real" action on a fictional mission off the coast of Libya. What she did was not much different from what John Wayne did in the World War II films *The Sands of Iwo Jima* (1949) and *Flying Leathernecks* (1951). In the former, Wayne is the sergeant of a marine infantry squad; in the latter he is the commanding officer of a Marine fighter squadron. In both cases he forges his unruly and high-spirited young charges into an effective highly disciplined fighting force. He, as an older, more mature character, teaches them by example and instruction. And when someone inevitably dies because one of his men failed the group, Wayne is ready (in *The Sands*) with the kind of after-action fatherly consolation that makes his charges determined not to screw up again. "A lot of guys make mistakes, I guess, but every one we make, a whole stack of chips goes with it. We make a mistake, and some guy don't walk away -- forevermore, he don't walk away." He says this with his eyes swelling up with moisture and his voice choking to give it greater poignancy. Wayne was always most effective, as here, when he gets almost to the point of crying but manfully holds it in.

Taking a cue from the John Wayne school of acting, Demi Moore also "manfully" holds in her tears throughout much of *G.I. Jane*, never more so than when she demonstrates extraordinary bravery during a brutal mock prisoner of war interrogation. She is finally accepted by the SEALs as one of the guys when she, hands tied behind her back, attacks her sadistic interrogator with a brutal kick to the groin (thus denying him -- at least temporarily -- his masculine advantage) and lets forth with a blue streak of verbal abuse that shows once and for all that she can use the foul language of the barracks like the toughest of the guys. After this the men she commands are ready to follow her anywhere. The point is that her actions, her example just like Wayne's, forges them into an effective team; whereas before they lacked group cohesion. *G.I. Jane* and many other war movies such as those of John Wayne demonstrate how organization development is, and always has been, an inherent part of military training.

Of course Moore, even with her hair in a crew cut, is not really the new John Wayne. After all, it is highly unlikely that she will make a career of war movies and become the symbol of an aggressive American military. Wayne first became that symbol in a major way in 1949 when he played Sergeant Stryker in *The Sands*. Wayne earned his first academy award nomination with this portrayal of a tough disciplinarian whose men hated him for his rigorous training methods until toward the end of the film, when they realize that his toughness saved many of their lives by making them so effective as a combat team. Wayne himself described the plot of *The Sands* as "the story of Mr. Chips

[a benevolent English boarding school teacher] put in the military. A man takes eight boys and has to make men out of them" (Suid, pp. 96-97). According to Roberts and Olson: "If one can imagine Mr. Chips cracking the jaw of one of his students with the butt of a rifle, the comparison is an apt one" (p. 319).

This film, made with the complete cooperation of the U.S. Marine Corps (the "cast of thousands" are mostly real Marines), has often been derided by "serious" critics, but has nevertheless become one of the most influential films of the twentieth century. It taught a whole generation of Americans what it meant to be a leader -- especially of small groups. Stryker's hallmark shouts of impending action -- "saddle up" and "lock and load" -- are still commonly heard in both military and civilian contexts. For example, journalist Pat Buchanan, who never served in the military, often used these phrases during his ill-fated political campaign for the 1996 Republican presidential nomination. The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich of Georgia, said *The Sands* was "the formative movie of my life" (Drew, p. 35). Stryker's style of leadership -- make them tough and effective even if they hate you for it -- is Gingrich's self-confessed tactic for shaping up his Republican insurgents for their successful 1994 assault on the House of Representatives.

Wayne played similar roles of the outwardly tough but inwardly caring older leader of younger men in *Flying Leathernecks* (1951) and director John Ford's U.S. Cavalry trilogy *Fort Apache* (1948), *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949) and *Rio Grande* (1950). But only his *The Cowboys* (1971) was a reprise of his role as Sergeant Stryker in a different guise. Here he is a Texas rancher who must literally use untrained boys to drive his cattle herd to the railhead many hundreds of miles away. But the plot, the organization development effort, is essentially the same: make these boys men enough for the job at hand. In both cases they dislike him at first but learn to love him because they realize his way will see them through. In both cases Wayne is killed -- by a Japanese sniper as the U.S. flag is raised in Iwo Jima in *The Sands*, and by a despicable cattle rustler played by Bruce Dern (Laura's father). In both cases the team can now carry on without him because he has trained, nurtured, developed them so well. In *The Sands* the squad goes on to secure the island as the Marine Corps hymn reminds us that this same kind of thing has been going on "from the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli." In *The Cowboys* the group realizes that they -- because of him -- are now strong enough to go it alone, to take back the herd from the rustlers and kill the villains for good measure. In both cases Wayne, much like the *Old Testament* Moses, gets his people almost to the "Promised Land" but dies before they can achieve it. They must go on without him. They can go on because of him. It is just this patriarchal aspect of Wayne that makes him, his characters, and his movies so sublimely moving and ultimately lasting.

But alas, the real John Wayne was no "John Wayne." The archetypal hero of so many movies and of America's popular imagination, far from being a hero, was quite the opposite. As a warrior he was a complete phony. Unlike many of his contemporary film stars, such as Clark Gable, Robert Taylor, James Stewart, Tyrone Power, Henry Fonda, Glenn Ford and Sterling Hayden, to name a few who gave up established Hollywood careers to serve in World War II with distinction, Wayne made every effort to avoid military service during the war. He was, more than any other major public figure, an

active, artful and successful draft dodger many times over. He simply arranged for the movie studios to say he was in a job essential to the war effort. However, by 1943 Wayne decided he would serve his country if he could get the assignment he wanted -- working for director (but now naval officer) John Ford's naval photography unit. But Ford couldn't get him in because all such billets were frozen at that time. According to Ford's grandson, "Wayne tried other avenues but couldn't get a commission. The only way he could get in the service was to enlist in the army as a private." Wayne explained: "I felt that it would be a waste of time to spend two years picking up cigarette butts. I thought I could do more for the war effort if I stayed in Hollywood" (Ford, p. 182).

Wayne's career thrived during the war when so many other leading men were in uniform facing the enemy while he faced the cameras. Many in the film industry never forgave Wayne for refusing to serve. "A few even claim that Wayne did not forgive himself -- that the compensatory super patriotism of later years, when he urged the country on to wars in Korea and Vietnam, was a form of expiation. If so, it was not enough. This is a man who called on other generations to sacrifice their lives, and called them "soft" if they refused" (Wills, p. 10).

Wayne's personal honor and patriotism notwithstanding, in the post war era he became -- and remains -- the national icon of organization development. Wayne's performance in *The Sands*, while excellent in its own right, was a movie cliché even then. The stern fatherly taskmaster who takes error prone "boys" under his wing and makes men out of them is a dramatic device that can be found as far back as the works of Homer in ancient Greece. It became the standard plot device for so many war movies because it lent itself so well to a story line needing a neat beginning, middle and end. *The Sands* is simply the leading example of this genre. Other films with almost identical plot structures include *Gung Ho!* (1943) starring Randolph Scott, *Battle Cry* (1954) starring Van Heflin, *Cockleshell Heroes* (1956) starring José Ferrer, *Darby's Rangers* (1958) starring James Garner, *The Dirty Dozen* (1967) starring Lee Marvin, *The Devil's Brigade* (1968) starring William Holden, *Gallipoli* (1981) starring Mel Gibson and *Heartbreak Ridge* (1986) starring Clint Eastwood.

The formula used by these films has three acts. First the disparate group is assembled and seen as a bunch of individualists not capable of functioning as a team. Almost always the group is ethnically diverse to represent the tensions and composition of the larger society. Thus there is often the college boy, the lumberjack, the "dead end" kid, the farmer, and the urban ethnics (characters that are obviously meant to be Polish, Italian or Jewish). Later as U.S. society became more inclusive, Hispanic-, Asian- and African-Americans would appear. The first "act" always has the various types gradually lose their "street" identities and under the harsh but benevolent guidance of the father figure drill instructor, mold themselves into a team whose motto might well be that of Alexander Dumas' *Three Musketeers* (1844): "All for one, one for all."

The second act has them performing as a team in training exercises and, often equally important, while on leave. For the purposes of the plot it is equally valid for the group to realize they are a team in a barroom brawl as on field maneuvers. It is the group adventure, the sharing of mutual stress and danger, that finally cements the individuals into a team. (This is the same reason why retreats and outdoor adventures are still popular means of developing civilian groups. The team that drinks together and climbs mountains

together will perform the mundane duties of their everyday work in a more cooperative manner.) Once team status is achieved and the young soldiers realize how good the tough training they initially hated has been for them, they are ready for the third act -- combat.

The third act validates the first two. It "proves" that the training works. While lives are inevitably lost, discipline and teamwork are shown to overall save lives and save the day. The father figure -- whether John Wayne or Randolph Scott -- is never more fatherly than when he leads them into danger and helps them fulfill their destiny as soldiers or cannon fodder.

One of the reasons films that follow this three-act formula have been so popular is that they ring true. While they have been decidedly sanitized for the mass public, they are true in that this is how the military -- of all countries for seemingly all times -- have indoctrinated and readied new soldiers for service. Thus the genre represents a time-tested method of organization development. The problem of course is that this particularly brutal method cannot be universally applied. First line supervisors (the industrial equivalent to sergeants) cannot demand an instant fifty push-ups from an errant worker. In the industrial world the punishments must be more psychological than physical.

So far we discussed the low end of war movie organization development. While such small unit plots offer the greatest opportunity for character development and audience identification, there is also a high end -- organization development at the command level. This is best illustrated by films such as *Patton* (1970) starring George C. Scott and *Twelve O'Clock High* (1949) starring Gregory Peck. In both instances new generals take charge of large units whose performance has been deficient. Yet even though they are generals, not sergeants, they use the same techniques of John Wayne's Sergeant Stryker to change the dysfunctional organizational culture that has led to failed operations and the sacking of the previous commanders. When Scott and Peck use their general's stars to impose a harsh disciplinary regime on their errant outfits, they are following Stryker's example and techniques but on a higher organizational level. And they get the same results -- an effective team that yields high morale and successful operations.

This same phenomenon can be seen at sea. Films of wartime naval action often demonstrate how organization development works on a single ship. *In Which We Serve* (1942) has Noel Coward commanding a Royal Navy destroyer with a green crew that he molds into an efficient ship's company. In *The Cruel Sea* (1953) Jack Hawkins has the same task as the commander of a convoy-escorting corvette. But by far the best navy organization development film is *Away All Boats* (1956) starring Jeff Chandler as the captain of a Pacific theater troop transport. This film shows organization development at two levels: the captain develops his staff of officers while the chiefs develop the sailors in a parallel manner. In each of these films the plot is a pure organization development play in that the captain is taking command of a brand new ship; then he has the opportunity to instill the organizational culture he thinks will be most effective.

While war movies offer seemingly countless examples of effective organization development, they also provide some excellent examples of the most ineffectual kind of organization development efforts -- those that make an organization far worse than it should have been. By far the most famous example of this is *The Caine Mutiny* (1954)

where destroyer captain Humphrey Bogart gradually loses control of his ship to mutinous officers. In *Attack!* (1956) Jack Palance stars as an infantry platoon leader who has to "carry" his inept commanding officer -- at least until Palance, for excellent reasons, shoots his cowardly commander. Because it graphically demonstrates that sometimes the best way to save the organization is to kill the boss, this is one of the few American war movies of the 1950s to be made without the cooperation of the U.S. Department of Defense. In *Paths of Glory* (1957) Kirk Douglas, as a French infantry colonel during World War I, suffers from the criminal incompetence of the French general staff. For showing the deadly consequences that can come from dysfunctional organizations, this film was banned in France for many years. Nevertheless, it remains the classic film of dishonor at the top and how not to do strategic planning.

The essence of this essay has been to demonstrate that the military throughout the ages -- and American war movies in particular -- have evidenced a sophisticated understanding of organization development long before this became a formal element of modern management education. Wayne's Sergeant Stryker may not have been anyone's ideal of your friendly organization development facilitator or consultant, but he -- quite literally -- knew the drill. Even without an advanced degree in applied behavioral science or public administration, he and his brothers-in-arms, going back to the legions of ancient Rome and beyond, knew how to instill planned organizational change. Higher education is a wonderful thing. But sometimes you can learn just as much by staying home and watching a bunch of old war movie videos.

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Bureaucrat-Bashing in the Galactic Senate: George Lukas and Public Administration

by
Mordecai Lee

Background

For public administration professionals, the astounding financial success and cultural impact of “Star Wars: Episode I -- The Phantom Menace” might make us feel vaguely uncomfortable. Attending the movie can be a pleasant and entertaining experience until, suddenly, the movie starts bashing bureaucrats. That certainly can make us squirm in our seats. Few people would want to be associated with a profession that is depicted so negatively in the signal pop culture icon of the decade.

We need to take a very close look at exactly what the movie says about bureaucrats. To tease the maximum amount of information possible from the movie, this analysis is not based on the published screenplay (Lucas, 1999). Rather, it relies on the authorized adult-oriented novelization of the movie (Brooks, 1999). The latter provides additional descriptive and contextual material beyond the screenplay. The centrality of the attacks on bureaucrats to the movie’s plot is demonstrated by their appearance as well in the youth-oriented novelization (Wrede, 1999) which is marketed to children between the ages of eight to twelve (Sholastic.com, 1999). The word ‘bureaucrat’ would not normally be considered to be in the vocabulary and at the reading level of 3rd through 6th grade students.

The story is complicated, but like everything else in life, the details are important. Let’s set the scene: The political entity governing the universe is called The Republic. The title of the chief executive is Supreme Chancellor and the title of the central legislative body is the Senate. One of the entities represented in the Senate is the Trade Federation. Another is the planet of Naboo.

Because of its disagreement with the Republic’s taxation of trade between star systems, the Trade Federation decides to blockade and then invade Naboo.

Amidala, Queen of Naboo, escapes during the invasion. She arrives at the seat of government in hopes of obtaining a resolution by the Senate for vigorous action by the Republic to reverse the conquest of her planet by the Trade Federation.

Bad Bureaucrats

Before having an opportunity to address the Senate, Amidala confers with Naboo’s Senator, Palpatine. Palpatine gives her his political assessment of Supreme Chancellor

Valorum, the mood of the Senate and the chances of obtaining relief. His report is downbeat and pessimistic:

The Republic is not what it once was. The Senate is full of greedy, squabbling delegates who are only looking out for themselves and their home systems. There is no interest in the common good – no civility, only politics. It's disgusting. I must be frank, Your Majesty. There is little chance the Senate will act on the invasion. ... [T]he chancellor has little real power. He is mired in baseless accusations of corruption. A manufactured scandal surrounds him. *The bureaucrats are in charge now.* (Page 212, emphasis added.)

The queen is startled by these observations, since she had received more positive and encouraging comments from the Chancellor himself. She asks Palpatine for his recommendation on a course of action:

Our best choice would be to push for the election of a stronger supreme chancellor – one who could *take control of the bureaucrats*, enforce the laws, and give us justice. (Page 212, emphasis added)

The queen is not convinced that this is the best option to pursue. But, Palpatine asserts that the cause is lost for the moment and that the occupation of Naboo by the Trade Federation cannot be undone.

In a scene reminiscent of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie's dramatic address to the League of Nations after Italy had invaded his country in 1936, Queen Amidala speaks to the Senate urging it to act to reverse the invasion of Naboo. Predictably, the Senator from the Trade Federation raises a point of order in order to deflect the impact of her emotional speech. The Chancellor, who is the presiding officer of the Senate, briefly pauses the session to confer with the Vice Chair and their aides at the rostrum about the point of order. While this conference is going on, Palpatine comments in an aside to Amidala:

Enter the bureaucrats, the true rulers of the Republic, and on the payroll of the Trade Federation. (Page 224)

When the meeting resumes, the Queen is frustrated by the inaction of the Senate and finally defers to Palpatine's advice. She makes a motion of no-confidence in Supreme Chancellor Valorum. The Senate deposes him. Palpatine is then nominated to be one of the three candidates for Supreme Chancellor.

Later, he reports to Amidala on developments after she left the Senate chambers:

I promise, Your Majesty, if I am elected, I will restore democracy to the Republic. I will put an end to the corruption that has plagued the Senate. *The Trade Federation will lose its influence over the bureaucrats*, and our

people will be freed from the tyranny of this unlawful and onerous invasion. (Pages 234-5, emphasis added)

The queen is skeptical:

I fear by the time you have taken control of the bureaucrats, Senator, there will be nothing left of our cities, our people, or our way of life to salvage. (Page 235)

She then decides to abandon seeking diplomatic or political redress of grievances and instead returns to her planet to pursue military means of restoring the freedom of her people.

Taking a Close Look at the Movie's Criticisms of Bureaucracy

What are we to make of this bureaucrat bashing?

The anti-bureaucratic comments of the movie and its novelization are very concentrated. They appear five times within 24 pages of a 324 page novelization of the movie and no where else. They are mentioned three times within 13 pages of the 144-page novelization for children (Wrede, 1999, pages 119, 120 and 132). They are highly jarring, consistently negative, and invoke the audience's pre-existing image of bureaucrats in American culture (Holzer & Slater, 1995, pp. 85-88).

As stories, most movies need dramatic tension and 'bad guys' as plot devices to keep the story moving. With clear counterpoints of good and bad, the audience knows who to cheer for and who to jeer. Without heavies in the movies, we'd be bored rather than entertained. The triumph of the good can only occur when there is also an evil to struggle with and then overcome. In that respect, one could simply assume that the Phantom Menace plucked the anti-bureaucratic mood from contemporary culture to fulfil, without the necessity for exposition, the need for bad guys. One could simply add the Phantom Menace to the long list of movies and other forms of art and public communication that create or exploit beliefs about public administration – sometimes positive images, but usually negative ones (Lichter, Lichter and Amundson, 1999; Holzer, 1997; Terry, 1997; Goodsell & Murray, 1995; McCurdy, 1995; Larkin, 1993).

Yet, upon closer examination, there are two aspects of this bureaucrat-bashing that deserve closer attention: the specifics of the stated reasons for the pointed criticisms of bureaucrats and the motivation of the person making the criticisms.

The screenplay is inconsistent in deciding what precisely is the bad thing that the bureaucrats do to justify the animus held against them. Three different reasons are used. First, they're bad simply because they act as bureaucrats. They exercise power in ways that reduces the control that the ranking political officer, the Chancellor, is able to

exercise over them. Second, they are described as being on the payroll of the Trade Federation and, presumably, making decisions that are favorable to the Trade Federation when the merits of the situation would dictate otherwise. Third, the Trade Federation is described as having great influence over the bureaucrats, without any suggestion of accomplishing this influence illegally or unethically.

These three criticisms are quite different from one another. As professional observers of government, the first criticism would strike public administration professionals as merely descriptive of the administrative state rather than a criticism of bureaucracy. Since the classic debate between Friedrich and Finer, we acknowledge that administrative agencies are not fully under the control of elected and other political officials (Harmon, 1995, pp. 47-51). While frustrating to some, this simply reflects the reality of delivering government services through a professionalized, permanent, merit-based and neutral administrative apparatus. In a democracy, Schattschneider declared startlingly 40 years ago, the people are only semi-sovereign. He noted, for example, that “public opinion about specific issues does not necessarily govern the course of public policy” (1960, p. 133). Other players, such as the bureaucracy, are important and semi-sovereign, too. The screenplay seems to be presenting an ur-Wilsonian perspective on the politics-administration dichotomy, of administrators seemingly expected to obey orders from elected officials, akin to the stereotype of Army privates obeying unhesitatingly, with no discretion to exercise, no questions to raise and no expertise to apply.

In that context, the first criticism of bureaucracy in the *Phantom Menace* seems to reflect a yearning for the simplistic and Jeffersonian form of government. This neo-populist and nearly demagogic attack ignores the realities of large organizations in government. It suggests that government and the people would be better off if there was no administrative structure ‘doing the constitution.’ What would be the alternative – the spoils system? Carrying this first criticism of bureaucracy in the *Phantom Menace* to its logical conclusion demonstrates its shaky intellectual foundation.

The second criticism of bureaucracy is that it is on the payroll of one of the political factions of the Republic. Certainly, it is easy for all to agree that bribery and financial misconduct are unacceptable for the proper functioning of public administration. No one can defend this. Yet, interestingly, the accusation of improprieties is only made once in the five times that bureaucracy is criticized in the *Phantom Menace*. One wonders about the obvious. If ‘everybody knows’ that the bureaucrats are being bribed by the Trade Federation, why is no criminal investigation underway, no judicial inquiry, no legislative committee hearings? Modern government has many effective channels to respond to such allegations and to hold administrative agencies accountable (Rosen, 1998).

The movie’s third criticism is that one faction has too much influence over the bureaucracy. The Trade Federation is alleged to have too much sway over the decisions made by administrative agencies of the Republic. This criticism is made without any reference to the use of illegal or unethical means to accomplish this undue influence. On its face, this, too, seems to be a hard allegation to defend. However, in public

administration there is a normative expectation for agencies to be responsive to their clients and customers. Furthermore, agencies are encouraged to maximize public participation in its decisions and policies (King and Stivers, 1998).

Given the Trade Federation's interest in trade and taxation matters, one assumes that the influence it exercised over the bureaucracy was primarily on matters that were of parochial interest to it. This may simply be the dynamic of an interest group exercising its democratic rights regarding policies emanating from agencies affecting it (Wilson, 1989). Just as labor unions have a great interest in the Department of Labor and businesses in the Department of Commerce, isn't it de rigueur for the Trade Federation to be actively interacting with the Trade and Tax Departments of the Republic? Certainly, it is objectionable when a bureaucracy is captured by the industry it is supposed to be regulating, such as the Interstate Commerce Commission and the railroads. However, the distinction between cooperation and co-optation is easier to describe than to categorize in specific cases and is often linked to an agency's struggle for existence and external support (Simon, Smithburg and Thompson, 1991; Selznick, 1966).

It is hard for students of public administration to be exercised about a special interest group having influence over an agency whose mission is to deal with that group. It certainly does not seem to be the major issue that the Phantom Menace makes it out to be. When agencies are too adversarial towards their clients, they can easily be criticized for confrontational tactics. In this respect, public administrators are in a lose-lose situation, where politicians can criticize them regardless of the path they take. In any event, the criticism of special interest influence over a bureaucracy seems hardly an impeachable offense justifying the deposing of the incumbent Chancellor.

In conclusion, the epithets that the movie spits out at bureaucrats seem simplistic and demagogic as well as inconsistent and contradictory. When examined in greater detail, two of the three criticisms appear to be more benign than at first blush.

What is the Motivation of the Bureaucracy Basher?

Palpatine, the representative of Naboo in the Senate, is the one who introduces the subject of the malevolent bureaucracy in the Phantom Menace. When Naboo's Queen later states the criticism herself, she is merely echoing what Palpatine had said to her. Since no one else makes any anti-bureaucratic comments, we don't know how widely held they are. Are they even credible? Therefore, it is important to determine the motivation for Palpatine's opinions.

When we are first introduced to Palpatine, he and the Chancellor are welcoming Amidala to the seat of government. Amidala notices "the man with the kindly face and anxious eyes" (p. 209), a reference, apparently, to Palpatine but perhaps to the Chancellor. Later, when she confers privately with the Senator, he is described as "gesturing animatedly as he *stalked* the room" (p. 211, emphasis added). This description hints that things are not

necessarily as they initially appeared to be and that something negative is occurring. Certainly, a Senator would not be conducting himself this way before his sovereign. Then, during the climactic meeting of the Senate, the Senator from the Trade Federation – Palpatine's supposed enemy – “exchanged a quick glance with Palpatine, but neither spoke” (p. 225). Finally, when the Queen decides to return to her planet and takes her leave of Palpatine, another character notices “the barest glimpse of a smile on the senator’s shrewd face” (p. 236).

These hints need to be connected with the earlier references to Palpatine’s interest in being elected Chancellor and his pessimism about rolling back the occupation of Naboo by the Trade Federation. All these factoids suggest that Palpatine is actually a traitor to his home planet and constituency and is working secretly in league with the Trade Federation.

If this is correct, then his criticism of the performance of the bureaucracy under the administration of Supreme Chancellor Valorum needs to be cast in a different light. Palpatine’s bureaucracy bashing, given his nefarious motivation, now appears to be a political cheap shot used to stir up opposition to Valorum. The criticisms of bureaucracy may have little to no merit and are merely cannon fodder for his larger political goals.

A (secret) bad guy is criticizing bureaucracy. If my enemy’s enemy is my friend, then the role of bureaucrats in the administration of the Republic shifts from a negative to a positive one. The bureaucracy is to be viewed in a new light, as a force for good. It functions as a partner of Chancellor Valorum in his efforts to promote peace and undo the illegal occupation of Naboo by the Trade Federation. As a permanent unelected institution of government, it is a threat and an obstacle to Palpatine’s virtual coup d’etat. The bureaucrats therefore need to be seen – albeit implicitly -- as heroes in the Star Wars saga, not villains.

At last! The truth is out. George Lucas admires public administration. Stay tuned for ‘Star Wars: Chapter II -- The Bureaucracy Strikes Back.’

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FRAGMENTS INTO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BRAZILIAN BUREAUCRACY'S IMAGE THROUGH THE CINEMA

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THE GENESIS AND WEIGHT OF BRAZILIAN BUREAUCRACY

At the apex of the collective indignation against President Collor's damaging government (1992), someone thought of carrying out a survey to find out public opinion's image of certain institutions and activities in Brazil. The results, in fact, were not surprising. Amongst the most accredited by the population there were the Church and the University; amongst the least recognized was the political activity and in the last place the businessmen. At that time, government corruption was intimately linked to the mutual privileges between the businessmen and the public sector, the two activities worst ranked in the survey.

Our purpose here is not the analysis of the cited survey, but to point out to the fact that the results seem to confirm - although the public servant was not mentioned negatively, if the political class represents the government and all its staff, it can be inferred that all the State was badly evaluated by the population.

This could be explained in part because of the weight and the permanent presence of various manifestations of the State, from the birth to the death of each Brazilian. It is an old phenomenon with various implications. Transported to Brazil in the colonial times, the Portuguese State institutions had two big moments in their acclimatization process. In the first moment, spanning from the discovery of the 'minas gerais' (general mines), the predominant regime is patrimonial with relative autonomy of the municipalities before the metropolitan power. Later, with the discovery of gold and diamonds a modification takes place in this scenario with the effective 'imposition of the State,' in the words of Francisco Iglésias. A police State, a fiscal State, a Justice State, which tries to refrain the turbulence of that land, called by one governor of that time as 'peace tomb.'

What can be seen, from the XVIII century onwards, is the crystallization of a State with centralizing and authoritarian characteristics, coupled with a small distributive capacity.

This is indeed the main reason for this kind of permanent feeling of strangeness experienced by the Brazilian population towards the State.

This situation did not change with the Republic. Marked by discretionary regimes, for long periods of dictatorships, the hundred years of the Republic did not bring greater recognition to the State.

CONSTRUCTING BUREAUCRACY'S IMAGE

If it is true that some of its institutions are valued by the population such as the University, as a whole the State has been taken as an institution with a strong parasitic content. This image, as all social images, is a collective construction, is a result of a political and ideological dispute, which tries to attribute real or mystified stains to the State, that, ends up legitimating a privatizing and individualistic discourse, that if it had little audience in Brazil up till now, it is beginning to gain more space in these neoliberal times.

One crux of this strategy is the fixation of an image of the public servant which throughout the time varied from the ridiculous 'meirinho' (a justice official) of the imperial times, to the bumbling bureaucrat of the Old Republic, and to the corrupt 'maharaja' which is the 90's version of this old strategy of disqualification.

These images of inept and corrupt public servants are also found in other cultures: Gogol and Dostoyevsky, in Russia, Kafka in Tchechoslovaquia, Balzac in France, created situations and types that embodied this ritualistic and alienating behavior so characteristic of the bureaucrats. In Brazil, literature, theatre, cinema and mainly television have contributed to the reinforcement of such images, constructing in the public imaginary a derogatory meaning for bureaucracy.

In this work we will take the cinema as a preferential object of our reflections about the construction of the bureaucrats' images in Brazil, analyzing some films, two of them from the colonial times, a period which is at the root of our present day bureaucrat stereotypes.

It must be emphasized that the Brazilian filmography is not vast and we can find only few examples of how bureaucracy is portrayed in films. Besides, although we have many good movies, public viewing is not very high. The television is indeed the most impacting vehicle in shaping public perception in Brazil. TV soap operas play an important role on the daily routine of most of Brazilian people since the 60's and they frequently make criticisms to the government or introduce some themes that are up dated with the social life of Brazilian people, usually in a very simplistic way. Another kind of TV productions, the mini-series, presents some historical facts more deeply or makes good adaptations from Brazilian literature. Most of them are available in VHS, increasing the chances for molding the bureaucratic images in motion pictures in Brazil.

ARTS SHAPING PUBLIC IMAGINARY

It is important to remind the festive and creative dimension of the Brazilian people and the importance that some cultural movements have had in some periods in Brazil-- 'Week of Modern Art,' in 1922; the 'Tropicalia' in the 70's. In this sense, we can say that here

there is a strong relationship of arts to reality - not only arts reflecting reality, but also reality being influenced by arts. One example of this last situation is again related to the process of impeachment of the President Collor in 1992. After a long dictatorial period, he was the first president elected by direct vote. In the middle of his government, the population was watching (mainly in the TV) the development of his incrimination process in the Parliament. A popular movement and some street manifestations started to happen, conducted mainly by youngsters. Coincidentally (or not), the most important TV channel showed a mini-series called 'Anos Rebeldes' (Rebellious Years), portraying the years between 1964 and 1971 in Brazil. This period was full of remarkable facts and radical changes taking place in Brazil and in all over the world. The military coup d'état restrained civil liberties, at the same time that the youth was experimenting its biggest moment of rebellion against the rules imposed by the Brazilian society. Many of them were jailed, tortured and even killed by the military regime. It seems that the youth movement that took place in the country in 1992, claiming for Collor's impeachment, might have been influenced by the extremely touching appeal of the Rebellious Years' series and for the feelings of justice and the search for a better society as showed in the mini-series.

This kind of situation demonstrates the importance of considering the role of the media and the arts in influencing public perception and behavior. As regarding the public sector, this has to be taken into account in order to search for the means of achieving a positive influence on the public service's performance, instead of getting it even worse by the criticisms and depreciatory images created in the society.

Marc Holzer and Linda G. Slater make an interesting discussion about "the ominous nature of the effect of movies on public service, since the media image of mediocre, unprofessional and inflexible bureaucrats make them become in essence like that - inot just in the eyes of the public but in the bureaucratic professional identity." They recognize that "the problem may be in the present nature of public bureaucracy,... but the image of incompetence is rarely balanced by any kind of portrayal of the positive role of the public sector." By doing this, the media "not only help to undermine support for the public sector but also create important consequences for compensation, recruitment, and retention. The message to potential and present managers is that the public service... is not an attractive place in which to work."

HOW WE SEE OURSELVES

It might be worth mentioning that in Brazil, probably due to our historical and cultural substance, we have a negative political and social ideology, which reflects in all aspects of our society, defining a general depreciatory social self-esteem. Expressions used by Brazilians to refer to our own nation such as "This country is worthless" and the use of

sarcasm and irony to comment on some Brazilian typical procedures and moral values are usually ways of depreciating the whole society.

This is such a schizophrenic, a sadistic-masochistic behavior, since we laugh upon our society faults as if we were not included on it. We do not feel ourselves as bad character or unscrupulous individuals, but when we refer to the Brazilian society, we frequently say it in a derogatory way. In this context, the State is obviously the emblematic institution of this depreciatory culture. The negative perception of the State is parallel to the negative perception of ourselves. The depreciatory image of the bureaucracy reflects one of the aspects of our negative collective self-image.

Finally, it is interesting to note that we are going through a special phase in Brazil, as regarding the renewal of our History. In the books' editors, the number of titles published increased five folds from 1990 until today. The Brazilian people are searching for its History in many kinds of publications and in the cinema. The recent success of a Brazilian movie called "Carlota Joaquina" with 1,2 million viewers had its plot based on the historical fact of the Royal Family migration from Portugal to Brazil. It seems that we are really trying to get a better grasp on our nationhood, maybe by rereading our History, searching for new facts that could explain such a negative feeling of self-esteem.

FRAGMENTS OF BUREAUCRACY IN THE MOVIES

"Os Inconfidentes" (The traitors)

Shot in one of the hardest moments of the military dictatorship, in the beginning of the 70's, the film "Os Inconfidentes" (The traitors), from Joaquim Pedro de Andrade, allows many readings. Besides the reconstitution of a fundamental episode of our history, the movie brings a subtext with strong incidence on the events of the period. It deals with the brutality and intolerance of the Portuguese State in the face of a limited attempt, partly a saloon conspiracy washed down with tea and cake, "secret soirées" that gathered the literati and the "good men" of the decaying "Capitania das Minas" (Minas Gerais region).

"Os Inconfidentes" is faithful to the basic documentation on the episode, the "Autos da Devassa" (the judicial inquiry), and therefore establishes, correctly, the image of the "Inconfidentes"- the aging poet stricken by sadness, Claudio Manoel de Castro; the passionate middle aged poet, Tomas Antonio Gonzaga, etc.

All the main characteristics of the process are recreated with precision and talent. The movie is very fortunate in the recreation of the main figure of the tragedy. The officer Joaquim José da Silva Xavier, Tiradentes, is depicted in the fundamental of his character and action. The only one of the accused who suffered the capital punishment, the only

one who came from the popular class, the only one who did not accuse his companions, that kept his integrity, Tiradentes is a problematic hero as a character of a realistic romance.

In the “Os Inconfidentes” one can find some of the most characteristic stains attributed to the State and to the Brazilian bureaucracy: corruption, police truculence, negligence, promiscuity between the public and private spheres. This can be seen in an emblematic scene where the governor and his submissive and venal dilator are shown together in a bathtub. It is known, from historiography, that one of the most important member of the “inconfidente” movement, the ultra-rich tribute contractor, Joao Rodrigues de Macedo, was not denounced because he bribed the authorities, a thing his employee, Vicente da Mata, could not do, resulting then, in his imprisonment.

The movie must be seen as an accusation of a certain tradition of our public institutions, frequently misused for particular interests, seldom engaged in the public interest.

At the end of the film, another striking characteristic of our political and cultural trajectory is the fact that the only defendant to receive the capital punishment was the only poor member of the group.

In this sense, the film has one more crucial aspect to actual times. Recent episodes of the Brazilian political life in which well known corrupts scape from punishment, reinforce further more the ample national consensus that the jail is reserved solely for the poor.

The film presents some elements such as the reiteration of a State uncommitted with public interests, frequently managed in an authoritarian way, in which there are no granted collective rights, only favor and privileges, that are at the basis of the historical impasses of Brazil, elements that put obstacles to a true political, social and economical emancipation of the country.

“O Judeu” (The Jew)

The Jom Tob Azulay film, also from the colonial times, is unknown by the general public. It is, nevertheless, a fundamental work to make the public administration in Brazil better understood, although done in an unexpected manner. In the movie, the director shows the action of the public servants linked to the Inquisition over the Brazilian poet Antonio José da Silva, in the first half of the XVIII century.

The way the narrative is constructed makes use of the memory and the identity. The character which gives the title of the film, “The Jew” Antonio José da Silva, struggles against himself to have his own identity, facing the dilemma of not knowing whether he was a new Christian, a Jew, or an old Christian. All the time, the public servants linked to the Inquisition Tribunal reminded him of his condition. The interrogators, searching for

contradictions and the dilation are key parts in a play characterized by secrecy and persecution.

In a certain part of the film, the youngest inquisitor has some doubts about Antonio Jose's first judicial inquiry. Even when it is clear that there are some equivocal facts, the ecclesiastical bureaucracy do not recognize its mistakes: it is preferable not to establish any doubts as regarding its acts, as this could provoke the system's collapse, since there were too many irregular inquires.

Considering the existing "Padroado" regime (Priest system) in Portugal at that time, where all the ecclesiastics were paid for their job by the Crown, and that the tithe were collected by the Royal Treasure, one can understand how the Church and the State were linked in the figure of the absolute monarch. D.Joao V, a ridiculous figure in the film, was known at that time as "Brazilian king," due to the wealth of his most prosperous colony. His power was undisputed over men and things. The first criterion to occupy any position in the State was loyalty to the monarch, including priests, diplomats, judges, the military and inquisitors.

In the movie, the figure of the inquisitor D. Nuno da Cunha de Ataide e Melo is shown in evidence - he tries to demonstrate independence and autonomy before the Tribunal decisions. Nevertheless, reality was different: the period of D. Joao V Kingdom showed to his subjects the absolute power. The only King who rules, governs and administrates without disputes or unloyalty.

It also appears, in the film, the counselor Alexandre de Gusmao, a stranger in the Lisbon Court, at that time in the beginning of his career, using corruption and blackmail to try to save his friend and artist's life. He did not succeed on it and this shows an irrefutable truth: in the absolutist regime of that time, when justice was synonymous with the sovereign's desires, the corruption in the lowest echelons was high, nevertheless with a lack of success in achieving the desired results.

We will not mention here scenes of torture, dilation, subservience, humiliation and annihilation of the persecuted, represented by the Tribunal action and in its influence on D.Joao V's government.

Since the public servants had to be strictly loyal to the monarch, one can understand why the priests, bishops and inquisitors' insertion in the political and civil life was so devastating and controlling, from the birth (christening) to the death (will). The meritocracy as a way of entering in the administrative career will happen only after the Republic Proclamation, in 1889, when the Church was definitively separated from the State.

From the arrival of the Portuguese royal family until the Republic, the Brazilian governors and the ecclesiastic bureaucracy kept the "Padroado" regime in function. A remarkable fact that still effects the contemporary Brazilian society was the use of this

right in 1850 (and the country was independent since 1822) when attributed to the priests the job of registering the terms of property instituted by the Law of the Lands.

Filmed in Brazil and in Portugal, the movie took many years to be finished due to economical problems. At the end, “O Judeu” did not get many viewers in the cinema but was produced in VHS, allowing the possibility of understanding this important part of Brazilian history.

Nowadays we can still find the influence of this close relationship between the State and the Catholic Church in Brazil. The priest can substitute the judge at weddings, and recently, the Pope came to Brazil probably to guarantee Brazil as the greatest Catholic country and also to try to influence the Parliament to vote against abortion.

“Tudo Bem” (It’s all right)

“Tudo Bem,” a movie from Arnaldo Jabor, filmed in 1978, has as central character or narrative axe, a retired public servant of the Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics - IBGE, Mr. Juarez, in a correct performance of Paulo Gracindo. The film starts with him, writing a letter to a newspaper, presenting himself as a retired public servant, a patriot, a Brazil lover, and an expert in statistics and prices. In the letter he complains about the abusive increase of the prices.

The director makes Juarez an expectator of the Brazilian reality and includes himself in this reality, as a retired public servant that believed and still wants to be a believer in his country.

In a comedy mood, with excellent performances, “Tudo Bem” gathers, in a middle-class apartment in Rio de Janeiro, some of the most characteristic types of contemporary Brazil. Comedy and tragedy are intertwined in a midst of worlds, stories, cultures, realities and perspectives absolutely different from one another.

Juarez, the master of ceremony of this spectacle, tries to understand this diversity and manages to get a big repairment in his apartment in the best way, in order to renew it. This repairment has been expected by his family for more than twenty years and now, despite the complete chaos in the apartment, it’s all right because the repairment is finally being done, representing probably a reform desired in the family’s life. His internal chaos is similar to the scene chaos, to his, our reality.

Juarez, most of the time in his pajamas (retiring in Brazil means “forever in pajamas”), sometimes drunk, tries to soften not only his own and his family’s drama, but also the workers’, the maid’s, the homeless’ and all the delightful characters’ drama who make the world of “Tudo Bem,” including his three friends from the past, who appear as imaginary characters. In a certain part of the film, one of these friends died, and in his funeral, he was praised not only as a poet, but also for public service to the Service of

Water Supply and Waste. It seems that the public service must be always reminded. It is always present.

At the end of the repairment, 1978, nothing is right, but a party is organized to celebrate the new apartment after many incidents, including the death of one of the workers, killed by a fellow. Juarez's family hides the bloodstains in the carpet and "it's all right." The party has a very important guest: an American guy who starts dominating the whole scene and ends up by orchestrating a choir of all the visitors in the party. It sounds like an irony to our relationship of subservience to American society, which is clearly one of the aspects of our low self-esteem that, at the end, could be extended to the Brazilian government low self-esteem as well.

This movie leaves an ambiguous message. On the one hand we can see a positive view of the public servant Juarez, which is not an unqualified one, although he once asks to himself "What for 30 years of integrity?" meaning maybe the inutility, usually imputed to the public service. Besides he "loves his country," he is still trying to make it better. His letter in the beginning of the film shows his indignation and revolt against the situation; he is not a passive man, as most of Brazilian people seem to be. But in a very symbolic reading, one can think that, after retiring, Juarez, with his pajamas, brings to his private life all the chaos of the public service. The movie can be seen as a mirror of our whole society, reflecting particularly our public service. And, at the end, the repairment happened, despite so many incidents. It reminds and could be associated to the Reform of the Public Administration being done in Brazil nowadays: it was very expected, but it has been done with countless dysfunctions...

"Por dúvida das vias"

The short movie "Por dúvida das vias" (literally "in doubt about the ways," which is a play on the words "por via das dúvidas," that means "just in case"), in only 20 minutes gathers and highlights all the characteristic stereotypes imputed to Brazilian bureaucracy in such a satiric and derogatory way that depresses any public servant that believes a little bit in the importance of his or her work.

From the beginning till the end of the film, each detail has the perspective of imposing on the viewer enduring negative images of the public service, with a substantial dose of sarcasm.

The presentation of the film is marked with stamps, with its typical sound, and the title is stamped in circled darts, maybe in a subtle reference to the image of the bureaucrat's circular reasoning or "tangling in red tape."

The plot is centered on a young journalist, Vera Lúcia, who is doing her first subject matter to be published, which requires some statistic data on suicide in the imperial times.

She has to finish her work that day, a Friday afternoon, and she has to get the data from a public institution.

The film shows her peregrination in the institution, where she stays all the afternoon wandering from place to place, trying to get the data, facing all the disinterest, cynicism and bitterness of the inept, callous and narrow-minded functionaries, numberless functionaries... The audience is exposed to extremely bureaucratic nonsense, highlighting the image of the bureaucrat as a buffoon.

It starts in the reception of the institution, where she meets two public servants (it is shocking to see two unpleasant persons just for reception) who treat her as an impersonal object. They talk to each other as if she were not there, making all sort of comments about her, almost as if she were a kind of enemy. They ask her about the application form she had to present and when she says she only needs some information, they say all together that she has to go to the information desk. There, she meets an attendant woman taking a nap at the counter (another harsh screen depiction). She finally is informed about where the sector is and the name of the person she has to talk to, in order to get the data. In the sector, she meets another stereotypical cipher functionary, a woman paring her fingernails who explains her that the crucial person that could give her the data is not there. It is a woman that does not work on Fridays afternoon, insinuating that she has some privileges due to an affair with her boss. In this case, she has to meet the boss to get formal authorization to get the documents she needs. She meets a middle-aged man approaching her in a climate of sexual harassment, who takes her to the boss (the sexual appeal always appears in many situations at the public sector.) Finally, she finds him dozing with a newspaper in his face (this situation for the second time convinces anyone that public servants usually sleep in the work). After making an agreement with the boss as to keep her silence about his affair, she gets the formal authorization, stamped (with a enormous stamp) in three or four copies (bureaucrats love papers and stamps). Her drama is not finished yet. When she finally finds the data, she does not manage to make a photocopy of them. When she leaves the institution, her car is being towed because it was in a no parking area. She seats at the building front stairs, beaten by the weight of bureaucracy and, at the same time, the functionaries leave the building without seeing her. They are mostly old, a pathological crowd. The film ends and still leaves a written message: she spent all her Monday in the Transit Department to get her car back (victim of one more public institution); she did not get that subject matter published, but she was prized five years later as best journalist.

What is stressed all over the movie is that the bureaucratic rules are ridiculous and hinder and obstruct people's work, causing disgust to anyone that depends on public institutions. Its title - In doubt about the ways - represents all the public distrust on public institution and at the end the frustration with government.

FINAL COMMENTS

As it was mentioned, cinema in Brazil does not play a very strong role in shaping public perception as television does. The short movies are still more restricted in terms of numbers of viewers, but on the other hand they have a very selected audience. They are usually showed in arts' cinemas, reaching more critical, intellectual people, that can multiply their effects, since these persons can influence many others - they are the opinion-makers. In this sense, such enduring negative images of Brazilian bureaucracy, as showed in the short movie reviewed above, can have a devastating impact in the construction of the popular images of the bureaucracy as inefficient and corrupted, with bureaucrats that are unable to think and totally insensitive to the needs of the populace.

It is worth asking to whom the demoralization of public service might interest. If the deficits of Brazilian bureaucracy, the quality of its performance and the precariousness of many public services can not be contested, it is necessary to affirm that if there is an aspect which has been absolutely neglected by the Brazilian State lately is the equipment, training and qualification of the State bureaucracy. Since 1938, when DASP was created, almost nothing was done in order to up-date and improve the civil service in Brazil. From this comes the vicious circle of poverty in which an unqualified, demotivated, badly paid and demoralized functionary execute his duties in an incompetent manner, especially to those people who need it most - the poor.

The movies from the colonial times, if on one hand they are important to clarify some aspects of our history, on the other hand they can also reinforce the bad characteristics of our public service, without leaving any clues to improve the situation.

To sum up, needleworking the fragments of bureaucracy on Brazilian movies, we found mainly criticism, which sometimes reach all the society in that typical Brazilian self mockery of their culture and history stains.

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Contardo Calligaris discusses this situation in "HELLO BRASIL! Notas de um psicanalista europeu viajando ao Brasil," ed. *escuta*, 13-24.

"In the usual and generic sense, "Padroado" means the right for administrating the religious' interests in oversea, done by concession from the Catholic Church to the Portuguese kings and later to the Brazilian emperors(...) In practical terms, the "padroado" regime represented the submission of the Church necessities to the Crown interests."

(*Dicionario da Historia da ColonizaÁ,,o Portuguesa no Brasil*, coord. Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, Verbo, Lisboa, 1994).

"The Catholicism was the official religion and the churches worked as registry offices, where the priests - real public servants - worked in their registry office activities."
(*Historia da vida privada no Brasil*, Sao Paulo, Companhia das Letras, vol. 2. p.14)

SIDESHOW BOBBY

IMAGES OF THE POLICE IN FLEMISH FILM AND TELEVISION

by
Dr. Jan Van den Bulck

The media and law enforcement

No part of government receives more media attention than law enforcement. A lot of news stories deal with crime, crime-fighting, crime-fighters, criminals or the courts (O'Keefe and Reid-Nash, 1987, Reiner, 1985, Lotz, 1991). Many documentaries or other information-oriented programs address similar issues. Even more important, however, is the attention given to the same material in fiction. Much of the fiction shown on the television or the cinema-screen is about crime and police work (Reiner, 1985, Signorielli, 1990). Even in many genres not generally seen as "police-" or even "action-" oriented it still has a considerable role as provider of secondary story lines (Gunter, 1987). In other words: in almost every movie or television series - be they serious or comic, action oriented or romantic, mainstream or alternative - there is at least one cop. Sooner or later a soap-opera character may be removed from the series by having him or her killed by a criminal or arrested by a policeman, or a father may be killed in a car crash leaving a mother

to provide for her children alone - and a policeman to break the bad news. In comedy, too, police officers often provide serious or comic events to create situations to which the protagonists have to react.

These observations are particularly true of the media in the United States. The same images are, however, spread all over the world. In Flanders, Belgium, most of the fiction shown on tv or in cinema theaters is American (Biltereyst, 1995). Series such as the X-files or NYPD-blue are shown by the major networks. The majority of movies on television and on the cinema screen are of US origin. Typically, in Flanders they are shown in the original version with subtitles. Flemish viewers are thus offered the same images as American viewers. Flemish schoolkids will, as a result, quote the American "Miranda Rights" in the correct order and in correct English the way they are usually shown in the countless representations of (mainly) NYPD or LAPD police procedures. Even though most of what is shown in Flanders about the workings, practices and personnel of American law enforcement agencies is fictional, people clearly seem to believe that much of the underlying information has a kernel of truth in it. As research has shown, particularly the continuous repetition of similar elements ("reading rights" before an arrest, flashing a badge or shield as the way in which a detective identifies him- or [less often] herself) suggests that this is what it is like in real life, too (Hawkins and Pingree, 1990:46).

This audiovisual fiction can have a number of effects. On the most obvious level it may teach people about crime in the United States (Gunter, 1987). Indeed, many people

report feelings of fear and unease when first visiting cities like New York, Los Angeles or Chicago. They believe they can judge the level of threat in these cities and the dangerousness of streets and alleys they walk in.

To an extent people will also learn something about their own situation from watching such images which nevertheless clearly deal with foreign situations. What they learn from this kind of fiction, however, deals with rather abstract notions about “the risks in society” or “the criminal mind” or “good usually wins over evil” etc. Thus they may develop a fear for serial killers or they may seriously overestimate the amount of violent crime in their own society (Van den Bulck, 1996). They may believe that the mentally ill are prone to violence (Signorielli, 1993) or that locks on hotel room doors can be opened using a credit card.

Generally, one would not expect their ideas about Belgian local or federal police forces to be influenced. Nevertheless they may believe that what they see of Standard Operating Procedures is not typical only of the American situation. They may believe that some of the things shown on tv are universal and may therefore expect something similar to the Miranda rights to exist in Belgium. They may (and usually will) not know how the Belgian judicial and investigatory system works and expect it to differ little from the American system. Better put: lack of knowledge may prevent them from realizing that what they see refers to the situation in the United States and not to “universal laws of law enforcement”. While watching TV or a movie they may not even realize that they are “learning” and generalizing about things they see in American fiction. Snow (1983) mentions that heavy viewers who become victims will expect being asked to leaf through books full of mug shots or to pick a suspect out of a line-up, etc. as shown in countless movies or popular series which show very realistic looking images of such procedures. This is not without importance. If viewers believe that certain procedures are an essential element of good police-work and discover that police officers they are confronted with in real life do not conform to their expectations, they are probably not going to be satisfied with the treatment they are given. This may seriously influence the process of coming to terms with having been made a victim of crime and it may dramatically influence their opinions about (the competence of) the police.

The traditional image of local and state police in Flemish audiovisual fiction

Flemish television does not only show American fiction. Some movies and an increasing amount of drama-series are produced for the Flemish market, too. Many if not most of the movies or prestigious television series produced in Flanders deal with the 19th century or the beginning of the 20th century. Most stories deal with either rural (usually somewhat backward) communities or the urban (impoverished) working class. In these productions one of three stereotypical images of law enforcement is usually presented.

The first two images are an essential part of stories dealing with little rural communities and story lines evolving around what happens to inhabitants or particular

characters or families in such a community. Law Enforcement in such a community is usually represented by the “Garde” (the French word for “guard”, used (even now) in many Flemish dialects to refer to local police as opposed to the federal Rijkswacht or “Gendarmerie”). Historically, the “Garde” was often the only person responsible for Law Enforcement and a number of administrative tasks in such small communities. The first stereotype portrays him in his traditional uniform and often armed only with a short sword. Present day viewers perceive him as impotent, powerless or downright “silly”. In many stories he is little more than the village idiot. Unaware of much of the law, unable to enforce it and generally disrespected he is mainly used as a comic sidekick. This Law Enforcement character is never an element of action. He is most often obese and keen on alcohol. He is innocent, but also powerless. He may create confusion, but never problems. He is not clever enough to solve the problems he is confronted with. He is a non-essential character who could easily be replaced. In many ways this stereotypical figure is a copy of the old Zorro’s “sergeant Garcia” (whom he usually even resembles physically).

A second stereotypical representation of the “Garde” is typical of non-comic themes about rural life at the turn of the century. A powerful historic myth in Flemish storytelling is the idea of the local clergy and a Baronet or another low ranking member of the aristocracy teaming up to take advantage of uneducated and ignorant local communities. The “Garde” is always a collaborator of these powers. He represents unlawfulness and *absence of the law*. Through ignorance or lack of effort resulting from corruption or subservience he protects the clergy and the aristocracy and prevents discovery or prosecution of what they invariably have to hide. He is a dangerously incompetent (and thus unwilling) or criminally (and corruptly) negligent (and thus willing) accomplice of other, often “higher” powers.

The third stereotype depicts a second police force known as the “Rijkswacht” (literally “State Guard”, a federal police force). It is a direct descendant of the French “Gendarmerie”, which was introduced in Belgium during the French occupation, starting sometime after the French revolution and ending at Waterloo. When Belgium became independent it became a Belgian police force structured the same way as the Belgian military, with the same ranks and insignia. Until very recently it was actually even a part of the Belgian Armed Forces. The “Rijkswacht” is federal. Officers were not usually stationed in the region in which they grew up. Even lower ranks were moved around the country regularly. The “Gendarmes” (the French word, but also the popular nickname in Flemish) therefore were a much more anonymous force. Usually they are only portrayed in non-comic stories involving the urban working class. The story invariably deals with the plight of poor workers at the start of the industrial revolution. When they revolt to demand what is only reasonable and human the powers that be (aristocracy and capitalists often with the implicit or explicit consent of clergy and monarchy) call in the “Gendarmes”. In line with the anonymity suggested by their military status and their lack of ties with the local community they are usually on horseback and always in groups often the size of a platoon. They are generally deployed to disperse unarmed crowds of men, women and children and usually do so by using rifle-butts, sabers or even

discharging live rounds into the mob. A typical such scene can be seen in the internationally distributed oscar-nominated movie “Daens”, which uses almost all of the elements described above.

In all these stories law enforcement characters only have a supportive role. What matters is the story or the message. The police are a symbol of the status of law and order. Whether as “village idiot” (local police in comedy), “collaborator” (local police in serious drama about rural life) or “enforcer” (state police in urban settings) they only play minor roles. The story, even if it deals with crime, unfolds elsewhere. Even a courtroom series as “Will the accused please rise” showed policemen only in a supportive role doing the work of bailiffs in American drama. Sparks (1992:37) remarks that the crime story is the most basic narrative form as every story involves the idea of order first being distorted and then restored, which is what happens when a crime is committed and the criminal is later apprehended and punished or brought to justice. Possibly the fact that the central story line or such Flemish fiction usually referred to *injustice* and often did not lead to a restoration (or installation) of justice or an acceptable social order, the role of police was rather unimportant. Usually, it was there only as a henchman for the establishment or as a gatekeeper which blocked any access to justice for the powerless or the ignorant.

From “sideshow Bobby” to “good guys-bad guys”

In 1989 the Flemish audiovisual landscape changed dramatically. Until then the only television network was “BRTN”, a public broadcaster funded by a licence fee. In that year, however, the BRTN’s monopoly disappeared and “VTM”, a commercial channel, began broadcasting along totally different lines. A large audience became important. Expensive “period pieces” became uneconomical and story lines moved towards action. Gradually, this seems to have meant that Law Enforcement Officers started to get a more central role.

Robert Reiner (1985) shows that most law enforcement stories can be categorized as one of 12 different types of stories. Interestingly, most of the older stories or stories using the stereotypes described above are difficult to categorize along these lines. The past decade, however, saw a move toward story lines which resemble the mainstream of international (and particularly American or British) crime stories. Consequently, Reiner’s typology can be used to categorize most recent series and films.

One such series is called “Along the docks” (*Langs de kade*) and shows the exploits of a harbor detail of the Antwerp PD. Some of the characters are mainly comic and resemble the old stereotype of the “Garde”: not particularly aware of the finer points of the law, occasionally loudmouthing offenders or ordinary citizens they are there mainly to provide comic relief. However, the series as a whole is an example of what Reiner calls the “police community”-story line. It shows the work of routine patrol cops,

who are very human. They deal largely with petty misdemeanors. There is no single “bad guy” and the victims are ordinary citizens (see: Reiner, 1985:153).

A second series, which still runs, is called “Red Handed” (*Heterdaad*). In Reiner’s words it is a “police procedural”. It shows “routine cops, using footwear, fingerprints and forensic labs” to solve crimes in stories where “whodunnit [is] less important than how [the villain is] apprehended” (Reiner, 1985:153). The police officers are portrayed as a team of dedicated professionals. They are hierarchically structured, but the division of labor is organic. “Red Handed” deals with the daily work of the detectives division of the “Rijkswacht” (State Guard) in Brussels. In numerous press interviews the people who produced the series stressed that much attention had been given to realism and detail. The actors spent several weeks on the road with real detectives. Procedures and police actions portrayed in the series were monitored by retired officers. As a result, this series suggested it showed the viewer how a Belgian federal detective does his or her work. It taught the viewer that they do not flash shields, as their American counterparts appear to do, they wear a red and white armband with the federal police’s logo instead. In the series actors used correct procedures for handling guns and the federal “SWAT”-team was shown dealing with a barricaded suspect - all unusually realistic and action- oriented developments in the story.

The most recent tv-series was called “Diamant”. Again it showed federal detectives, this time based in Antwerp. The story line resembles Reiner’s “deviant police”. A rogue cop discovers a valuable diamant on a murder victim and removes it. Without such crucial evidence and with the active obstruction of one of the detectives it becomes impossible to solve the case. The “rogue cop” then tries to sell the diamant, which takes him all over the world and in the beds of several women. The state police force are depicted as generally honest, but with bad apples. Again, all the elements of Reiner’s typology are present in the story (Reiner, 1985:153).

Conclusion: whereto with portrayals of the Belgian police?

Looking back at what was written above, it appears that images of the Belgian local and state police in audiovisual fiction have become “Americanized”. Stories and portrayals have started to resemble the mainstream of mainly American (and to an extent perhaps British) fiction. More time, effort and money has been put into making settings more realistic. Action scenes have become less amateurish and laughable. Law Enforcement Officers have become the central characters of the story and an effort has been made to make them “human” by showing them in their families, dealing with the pressures of their job (and the stereotypical ensuing divorce).

Recent events may, however, have considerable impact on how the police will be portrayed in the near future. Following the discovery of a number of gruesome serial child-murders (the Dutroux-case”) parliamentary committees looked into the possibility of either wide-spread police corruption or police incompetence. Other, older, cases of

major crime which went unresolved and hence unpunished for years were brought up again as well. Amongst other things the hearings revealed considerable strife between police forces on various levels (a "*guerre des flics*"). The entire criminal justice system is having to learn to cope with intense governmental, media and public scrutiny, a practice against which its members used to be immune.

To an extent, the Belgian judicial system undergoes what its counterpart in the United States underwent in the sixties and seventies. The result will probably be more public scrutiny of the police, ongoing professionalization, increasing interforce cooperation and more attention to public affairs, community policing and (inevitably) news management (or spin doctoring). However, it remains to be seen how the entertainment industry will react. It is almost certain that even more attention will be given to law enforcement in storytelling. This can go several ways. There is a deep-rooted believe in the dark side of government and in conspiracies in Flemish culture. To some there is ample evidence that criminal conspiracies exist or have existed in the higher regions of government, the military and members of special police units (with the alleged involvement of extreme right wing members of federal SWAT-teams in murderous and very violent hold ups). This may lead to a long line of conspiracy stories, particularly in an era where similar ideas are popular through series such as the X-files which have a following in Flanders, too. A toned-down version of the same idea fits themes dealing with the friction and discord between different Law Enforcement agencies, with agencies refusing to cooperate with one another and jealously keeping essential information hidden. A third "bad cops as bad guys"-theme might refer to the idea of police corruption and individual policemen conspiring with criminals for personal gain - another story line clearly suggested by the results of the parliamentary hearings.

At the same time, however, the need for action-entertainment and the example of foreign (mostly American) films and series may inspire a totally different line of storytelling (as is currently the case with "Red Handed") in which the police officers are hard working professionals or action heroes. The public cry for more professionalism and for a revamping of most agencies supports this move away from the traditional stereotype of silly, boorish and not-too-clever incompetents.

Neither of these potential story lines excludes the other ones. The entertainment business is not into correctly or fairly portraying the police. It is into telling stories. Even though some elements of stories (particularly regarding procedures which aid in telling the story) often reoccur ("intertextuality"), themes can easily contradict each other. One channel may air a series in which police officers are shown to be corrupt or incompetent, another channel or simply another film may portray the same force as an elite unit full of dedicated and efficient crime fighters.

Whichever way it goes, it seems clear that images of Law Enforcement in Flanders have actually moved away from culture-specific stereotypes, which may have been typical of Flemish storytelling or myth towards story lines and ways of telling the story which resemble the mainstream of what is internationally distributed. Which effects

this may eventually have on the ideas the public, the government and even officers themselves have about police work, will be an interesting development to monitor.

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BUREAUCRACY ON THE SILVER SCREEN: IMAGES OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN THE SPANISH MOVIES.

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INTRODUCTION.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a general overview of images of public servants in Spain over a period of time (1932-1997). In order to achieve that goal I will examine bureaucratic images in motion pictures from Spain beginning in the 1930,s and finishing with the latest Spanish films shown in 1997. From the beginning to the end of this period there have been a lot of political and social changes which have deeply affected the life of Spaniards and these changes have an influence on the images of civil servants in Spanish movies. The social stereotypes of bureaucrats, however, have to a certain extent remained unchanged throughout this period and this firmness has had also an influence on the bureaucratic images on the Silver Screen.

It will be necessary to clarify certain concepts with a view to understanding this paper.

POPULAR FILMS AND BUREAUCRACY.

It can be said that films are a powerful instrument to understand a country and its culture, but not all kinds of films can help in the same way for this purpose. In order to know the culture and customs of a country there are at least three different types of movies we must examine.

First of all there are movies which are part of a whole class of films and share with them most of their features. The characteristics of these kinds of films are universal to some extent in that they are relatively independent from the culture of the country where the film was made. In general these movies tend to show the world according to the social standards and situations which differentiate them from other classes of films. For instance, a thriller or a western do not want to show the real world but a very particular world of their own. Obviously these movies are not the best way to understand a country and its culture (probably, with the exception of the U.S.A.).

Secondly there are films where the director tries to express exclusively his/her feelings and thoughts. In order to achieve that goal the director shows a very personal world, a world isolated to some extent from external reality. These films do not show a country, but rather the internal world of the author. Sometimes the culture and customs of the country where the film is made are deeply distorted to reflect the author's obsessions. For these reasons such films do not help to understand a country either.

Finally, there are popular films which encounter strong difficulties for being exported (with the exception of the popular films made in the U.S.A.) because the events and problems lived by the main characters of the film are not shared outside the country where the film is produced (Elena, 1997). Sometimes there are customs and social rules that

cannot be understood by foreigners; at other times these movies are based on pre-existent cultural products or on the popularity of a well known actor. The latter is the case of the Yoruba musicals from Nigeria, or the humorous films featured by the Finnish actor Uuno Turhapuro.

In any case, these movies have a strong links with the social myths and customs of the country where they are made, and are powerful instruments for understanding a country and its culture. Consequently they are one of the most important loci where the social images of civil servants can be found.

For these reasons and according to the main goal of this article I have studied particular Spanish popular films. They are the most important source of information in order to examine bureaucratic images in motion pictures from Spain.

SOCIAL STEREOTYPES OF BUREAUCRACY AND THE SPANISH MOVIES

According to different sociological studies, the most important feature of the civic culture of the Spaniards is the predominance of rights over duties (C.I.S. 1993; 1994; 1995), which means that we tend to demand our rights and to forget our duties. This tendency is somehow linked to the recent arrival of democracy. Some people thought that democracy meant the recognition of rights and the end of duties, and this tendency to egoistic behavior constitutes a very important problem for our democracy. Nevertheless, on the other hand there are also tendencies to very strong altruism. It can be said that something is changing in favour of a democratic civic culture, however slowly and, in any case, people show a very strong support for democracy in general.

Another important issue is that there is no positive image of our society because we tend to think (76% of those surveyed; see sociological studies above and Del Pino, 1997) that most of the other citizens are not good citizens. Almost 40% of those surveyed believed that the other citizens tend towards egoistic behavior and selfishness. A result of this lack of social trust makes the State play a dominant role in social interaction, and even 63% of those surveyed thought that Public Administration played a decisive role in their lives.

Government and Public Administration are extremely important institutions in social life, but Spanish people generally consider that the State is something alien to them: "We are not the State" is a very common sentence. There are two consequences of this social feature; on the one hand, there is a certain lack of concern for the public interest: the State has to solve all the problems; on the other hand there is a tendency to consider public goods as something "not mine", something which belongs to the State. There is also a certain social cynicism. Most of the citizens show strong scorn for antisocial behavior, but this kind of behavior is always performed by other people.

In different surveys (see citations above) the Spaniards have shown very little interest in politics (not more than 20% of those surveyed answered that they were very interested in politics), and there is also a certain bias against politicians and political parties: "They do not care about me" or "They are selfish and they are always looking after their personal interest" are the most frequent comments.

According to these surveys, the most important problem of the Spanish Public Administration is corruption (Del Pino, 1997) and probably this opinion has to do with very important scandals that have broken out in recent years. Corruption has, however, always

been a social stereotype of the Spanish Public Administration. Most citizens think that our politicians do not want to solve this problem because they profit from it.

Public Administration is something alien and hostile, and it is difficult to understand its language. 83% of those surveyed believed that if they had to go to a public office they would have to wait a long time before being attended. 75% of them thought that in public offices bureaucrats send you from one place to another because they do not want to work. 71% of those surveyed thought, however, that in the last ten years (this survey was from 1993) the service received from the Public Administration had improved.

According to social stereotypes there is no fair treatment in the Spanish Public Administration. On the one hand, old or poor people do not receive the same services as rich people or big companies. 71% of those surveyed thought that there is social discrimination in the Spanish Public Administration. On the other hand, there is no equity: "powerful people use bureaucracy to increase their power and poor people do not receive enough support" or "it is necessary to have powerful friends to solve your problems with the Government" are very common remarks. This problem is greater when politics are involved in the issue at hand because "the Spanish Public Administration is influenced by political concerns". Finally, people sense a lack of responsiveness to their demands. Too frequently citizens feel that they are not heard. There is also a lack of compassion; clients are turned into cases.

The social image of the Spanish civil servants is no better. In relation to motivation, most of those surveyed believed that the Spanish civil servants did not possess public service motivation. Public service motivation "may be understood as an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations" (Perry and Wise, 1990, p.252). They think that the motivation to work in the civil service is job tenure (86.3%) or the relaxation of productivity controls on government offices (46.3%). In relation to civil servants' attitudes toward public services customers, those surveyed believed that Spanish civil servants tend to be slow, inflexible, authoritarian and not very customer orientated. Finally, with regard to the knowledge and skills of the civil servants, those surveyed believed that the Spanish bureaucrats tend to be good professionals.

However, according to different surveys the Spaniards are satisfied with the public services they receive and think that these public services are improving. These contradictory findings mean that a very important part of the previous data are the consequence of social stereotypes we have been building up for centuries. These social stereotypes can be found before and after democracy in Spanish popular movies, and as a consequence these kinds of movies are contributing to keeping them alive.

In general, there are two different ways of showing the public sector in motion pictures. It can be shown according to the social stereotypes or it can be shown contradicting these social myths. Usually, when a movie portrays bureaucracy contradicting social stereotypes there is a political strategy behind the Silver Screen. On the one hand this political tendency can be the consequence of Government policies trying to improve the image of the political system. In authoritarian regimes the Government tends to support movies which show a good image of bureaucracy. In Spain during Franco's dictatorship we had to experience this kind of policy. Movies which supported the ideology and values of the civil war victors received public funds and bureaucratic help, whereas movies which did

not support those ideas and values were forbidden or had to suffer censorship before public viewing.

On the other hand, if the Government and the public sector enjoy a good social image -- this is not the case in Spain -- it is possible to find movies where directors try to fight against this public support. There are movie directors with strong ideological beliefs who build images against the political system and its bureaucracy, such as Ken Loach.

In Spain, during the dictatorship, certain movie directors used the social stereotypes of bureaucracy in order to criticize the political system. Later, with the arrival of democracy, bureaucrat bashing has continued on the Silver Screen, but with different aims: a critical review of dictatorial times or an easy way of having fun. Spanish bureaucracy has, however, occupied an important role in the script in very few films.

For the purpose of this paper the films I am most interested in are those which reflect social stereotypes. These films allow us to understand the relationship between Spaniards and their bureaucrats and the way in which Spain sees the public sector. Usually, these movies are popular movies which means, as I said before, movies strongly related to the problems, culture and customs of the Spaniards.

BUREAUCRATIC IMAGES IN MOTION PICTURES FROM SPAIN.

I would like to begin this history in 1932 as in that year one of the most important Spanish film directors, Luis Buñuel, made a documentary film which provides information about one of the poorest regions of Spain. We can see in that documentary hungry people, terrible diseases and extended poverty in Las Hurdes. There are no images of bureaucrats, but Government and Public Administration are denounced as ineffective by director Buñuel in this film. From 1935 to 1936 two very important films were produced and directed in Spain: Benito Perojo's *La Verbena de la Paloma* and Florian Rey's *Nobleza Baturra*. In these two movies, however, there are neither images of bureaucracy nor political criticism. During the civil war (1936-1939) there were a lot of propaganda films in which the army was the main character. The republican side tried to show the effectiveness of its popular army and the fascist side tried to show the advances of its professional army. On the republican side there were interesting documentary films wherein different directors highlighted the effectiveness of public policies on environmental protection, irrigation, culture and commerce. The French writer André Malraux directed in 1939 *Sierra de Teruel*, probably the best film made during the civil war. In this film Malraux showed the heroic deeds of republican pilots and the peasant support of the republic. The heroic deeds of the republican army did not, however, prevent the triumph of Franco with the support of Hitler and Mussolini.

From April 1939 onwards, Spanish movies became an instrument of political propaganda and were subjected to political approval. Therefore, as a result of this bureaucracy had to be shown in very positive terms; Antonio Román's *Escuadrilla* (1941) glorified the Spanish Air Force; Ramón Torrado's *Botón de Ancla* (1947) glorified the Spanish Navy; Ignacio F. Iquino's *Brigada Criminal* (1950) is an interesting thriller, but it begins with a voice which says "the Spanish police is the best police of the world...". Finally, Franco himself wrote a script for a film. This film was directed by Jose L. Saenz de Heredia in 1941. In this film the Spanish army was glorified again.

In 1951 the Spanish cinema began a new period. A certain relaxation of controls on government censorship allowed the public showing of a different kind of film. *Surcos*, directed by Jose A. Nieves, is an engagé film where social problems are shown realistically. The peasant immigration from the village to the cities and the problem of housing are highlighted in this film. And there is an implicit criticism of the Spanish bureaucracy. Jose A. Bardem continued the path which was opened by "Surcos". Bardem was engaged in politics and his ideas were very close to the communist party. His films *Muerte de un Ciclista* (1955) and *Calle Mayor* (1956) depicted a frightened and dehumanized Spanish society.

The Italian Marco Ferreri worked in Spain with the script writer Rafael Azcona and directed two wonderful films: *El Pisito* (1957) and *El Cochecito* (1960). *El Pisito* is a humorous movie which portrays the terrible problem of housing in Spain in the 1950s. A rich and sick man lets a house to an old lady at a very low rent. This old lady in turn rents out rooms of that same house to a podiatrist, a prostitute and a poor man who is like a son for the old lady. This unlucky man tries to obtain an official statement declaring that he has the right to continue as a tenant after the old lady's death. The inflexible bureaucracy, however, rejects his claim and hence he is obliged to marry the old lady to continue as a tenant in the house.

Manolo Morán, a very popular Spanish actor, played *Manolo, Guardia Urbano* (1956), a film where the main character is a policeman whose job is to control and direct traffic in Madrid. This public officer helps everyone in the neighbourhood and is loved by almost everybody. He is a very kind and lovely person. This same actor was featured in another film in 1955 where he was a military officer who had a good and friendly personality. With these kinds of films the Spanish army and police put their best face on the Silver Screen. However, the movie directors could not avoid showing the implied ineffectiveness and poor management of our army and police.

Some of the best Spanish films of the 1950s and 1960s are directed by Berlanga. *Bienvenido Mr Marshall* (1952), *Calabuch* (1956), *Plácido* (1961) and *El Verdugo* (1963) are masterpieces. Besides being an excellent director, Berlanga is also the Spanish director who is most interested in bureaucracy. In *Bienvenido Mr. Marshall*, the mayor of a very small village receives information about the next official visit of an American delegation to the village. Everybody in the village cooperates in the preparation of the welcome. During the preparation the stereotypes of American people mix with the stereotypes of Spain in a very funny way. Finally, the American delegation pass through the village without stopping. In this film we can see a friendly but ineffective mayor, an ignorant local bureaucracy and a very poorly managed municipality. It is a metaphorical film which implicitly criticizes the Spanish government for failing to deal with the problem of the lack of American help to Spain.

According to the critics, *El Verdugo* is rated as one of the three best Spanish films in history. Apart from this distinction it is also the most important film about the Spanish bureaucracy. The main character of the film is an undertaker who goes to prison to pick up the dead body of a man who was executed for murder. There he meets the executioner, an old man close to retirement. The executioner invites him to his home where the undertaker meets the beautiful executioner's daughter. The undertaker dates the young lady several times, and one day they make love in the executioner's home and she

gets pregnant. She decides to tell her father about the problem and her father accuses the undertaker of disloyal and unfaithful behaviour. The young man feels obliged to marry the executioner's daughter and finally they get married. During this time the executioner is entitled to receive an apartment as a civil servant. But when the three members of the family have to officially take possession of the apartment the bureaucrat in charge rejects the claim of the executioner because he will have retired by the time the building is finished. According to the rules, the only solution is for the undertaker to become the next executioner once his father-in-law retires. The poor undertaker does not want to become an executioner as he feels unable to kill even a fly. His wife and father-in-law however persuade him to apply to the Ministry of Justice for the job. They convince him that death penalties are highly unlikely in Spain. In the Ministry of justice the bureaucrat in charge tells him that he will need a good recommendation to get the job. This bureaucrat is playing chess during the appointment and is very upset when he receives from the applicant all the documents he requires for completing the dossier. Finally, thanks to the recommendation of a man who writes books in favour of the death penalty, the undertaker gets the job. When he gets the job the family take possession of the apartment. They -- the father-in-law, the couple and the little child -- live happily there; however, one day the new civil servant receives the order to execute a prisoner in Mallorca. All the family goes to Mallorca together. He is waiting for an official pardon, but it does not come. Finally he has to kill the prisoner, but he refuses to do it. Two prison officers force him to do his job.

In "El Verdugo" we can see all the stereotypes of the Spanish bureaucracy together. The motivation to become a civil servant is housing and job tenure. The different kinds of bureaucrats we see in the film -- prison officers, customs officers, policemen, clerks and officials -- are authoritarian, slow, not customer oriented and inflexible. Bureaucracy is something alien and hostile. In the Spanish Public Administration there is no fair treatment; it is necessary to have recommendations to become a civil servant, and we can feel in the film the lack of compassion of the Spanish bureaucracy for the suffering of others.

Most of the Spanish films from the beginning of the 1960s to the end of the dictatorship are films where the director tries to express his feelings and thoughts. The New Spanish Cinema was influenced by the French "nouvelle vague" or the British "free cinema". Carlos Saura is probably the most influential director of that time. *La Caza* (1965) is a fable about power and submission. *Ana y los Lobos* (1972) and *La Prima Angélica* (1973) are a way of showing certain traumas produced by dictatorship in the Spaniards' minds. In these films of Saura bureaucracy is not the main character, but the images of bureaucrats shown lack a sense of duty and are very close to the stereotypes.

Martin Patino's *Queridísimos Verdugos* (1974) is a documentary film where executioners are interviewed and explain their terrible experiences; obviously, the fact that these kinds of civil servants were chosen does not affect the image of civil service positively.

Jose L. Borau's *Furtivos* is another fable about power and submission. One of the most important characters in the film is the Governor of the province who protects a murderess and shows authoritarian attitudes.

With the arrival of democracy and the end of censorship a lot of the films made in the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s were a critical review of the dictatorial times.

Some of the films showed the point of view of those defeated in the civil war. The images of bureaucrats were very negative, especially the images of policemen and the armed forces. This is the case of films like *Los Días del Pasado* (1977) from Mario Camús or *El Corazón del Bosque* (1978) from Gutierrez Aragón. Corruption in Public Administration during the dictatorship is clearly shown in films like *La Escopeta Nacional* (1978) from Berlanga or *La Mitad del Cielo* (1986) from Gutierrez Aragón. The system of links and connections between certain policemen and the extreme right wing is denounced in Gutierrez Aragón's film *Camada Negra* (1977) and in Juan A. Bardem's *Siete Días de Enero* (1979). The use of torture against prisoners was denounced by Pilar Miró in *El Crimen de Cuenca* (1979).

In 1982 the Spanish Labour Party (PSOE) won the elections. This victory was repeated three more times. In 1996 a right wing party (PP) defeated the PSOE. From 1982 to 1997 the Spanish cinema tended to forget dictatorship. This new era has allowed Spanish movie directors to look at this new Spain and to show the image of a democratic bureaucracy on the Silver Screen.

Although there are still a many films in which the plot takes place during the civil war or in Franco's time, there are fewer and fewer every year. One of the best of these films is Fernando Trueba's *El Año de las Luces* (1986). In Antonio Mercero's *Espérame en el Cielo* (1987), in Jaime Camino's *Dragón Rapide* (1986) and in Francisco Regueiro's *Madregilda* (1993) Franco himself is the main character.

According to Berlanga's films, corruption in the Spanish Public Administration continues despite the arrival of democracy. *Patrimonio Nacional* (1981), *Nacional III* (1982) and *Todos a la Cárcel* (1993) are a satire of our politicians and bureaucrats. They are selfish and they make inefficient decisions. Obviously, fairness is not the value which motivates their behaviours.

Policemen in Almodovar's films tend to be rude and ignorant, as for example in *Mujeres al Borde de un Ataque de Nervios* (1988). The military people are not good professionals and their attitudes are too authoritarian. Jaime de Armiñan's *Mi General* (1987) and Giménez Rico's *Soldadito Español* (1988) are very good examples of a critical image of the Spanish military.

La Vida Alegre (1983) from Fernando Colomo is a good comedy in which the main characters are bureaucrats and politicians. The minister of Health (from the Labour Party) has a lover: his secretary. She does not know how to type a letter or how to switch the computer on. A bureaucrat who works for the Ministry of Health, and who is an old friend of the minister, helps him in his affair; For example, he has to make reservations for the lovers in different hotels or he has to take the Minister's mistress in his car. This bureaucrat gets promoted thanks to his secret job. The bureaucrat's wife is a physician in the public health system. She has budget problems which make it difficult to do her job properly and she tries to get tenure in her position. The minister's wife has an affair at the same time with one of her husband's bodyguards. The bodyguard transmits a sexual disease to the Minister's wife. She, in turn, transmits it to her husband. The minister, who is ignorant about his disease, decides to implement a new program against sexual diseases and in order to promote it, he will be the first customer of this new public service. The results of his check-up are stolen by a journalist. Finally, the minister is caught in a terrible public scandal and he has to resign.

This last film shows some of the stereotypes of the Spanish bureaucracy again: recommendations for promotion, self-interest, inefficiency, etc. But at least we can see a good image of public sector physicians, they try to do their job the best they can.

CONCLUSIONS

The best Spanish movie directors have shown a negative image of the Spanish bureaucracy. During the dictatorship they reproduced the social stereotypes of the Public Administration and its civil servants. They did it in an implicit way in order to avoid problems with the censors. During the first years of democracy these social stereotypes were reinforced. Movie directors used images of bureaucrats in order to criticize the old political regime. These images were very critical of the Spanish bureaucracy.

But during the last ten years something has changed in the Spanish cinema; The images in motion pictures of public sector physicians, teachers or social service workers are not bad, and even the images of policemen are improving. In spite of this, the social stereotypes of bureaucracy remain alive in the Spanish cinema. They will probably continue to be portrayed in the Spanish popular movies for a long time since these social stereotypes have been built by the Spanish society for centuries.

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THE BOLLYWOOD BUREAUCRAT

by
Mona Choudhary

Indian cinema provides a rare and single point of union to its diverse population of 950 million who collectively speak more than 15 different languages and 300 dialects. An integral part of the lives of most Indians, Indian cinema is immense in its reach and impact. It creates stars that are venerated as Gods and elected to high political offices as well. Actors and actresses are household names, and although they themselves are elusive, their omnipresence is inescapable.

Dada Saheb Phalke's epochal 1913 feature film *Raja Harischandra* (King Harischandra) heralded the birth of the Indian film industry, which today is the largest in the world. It produces nearly 900 films a year, twice Hollywood's number. Huge amounts are spent on each film. It takes \$1.75 million to finance a blockbuster, which provides the poorest in India with three hours of entertainment for much less than a dollar. Although the money spent on Indian films may seem small in comparison to that invested in film making in the West, it is astronomical for a country fraught with hunger, poverty and financial extremity. Interestingly enough, it is also an escape for the masses from the harsh realities of their day-to-day lives. A large percentage of these films are made in Bombay, which is the heart of the Indian film industry. The term "Bollywood" has been coined for it, much in keeping with the current trends of aping the West. While some states within India make regional films which are popular too, Bombay's cinema has the largest reach since most Indians understand and respond to Hindi films and music. Within India, the popular Hindi film is also referred to as "masala film," signifying a melange of spicy themes.

Popular Indian films reflect themes that are used repeatedly in most movies. The fight against injustice, struggle of good against evil, undying loyalty to friends, revenge, and family drama are some of the common themes. These themes are interspersed with a lot of colorful and extravagant song and dance. Even though the audience can predict the plot from the start, the thrill never seems to fade. The intrigue of Indian cinema endures then, not because of the innovative plots, but due to the variety of emotions each film can present and the hold that actors and actresses have over the audience. Indian films have the ability to reduce complex social and economic issues to simplistic themes. According to Shyam Benegal, a leading Indian director, "the basic draw is spectacle and spectacle has to be simple, it cannot be complex. You have good and evil clearly marked out"(Nigel Andrews). However, on the other end of the spectrum, outside mainstream cinema, more serious, seminal films are made. This is the virtual pariah area of the art movie. Alongside the nonsense of the commercial film there exists a parallel cinema where different, more realistic approaches have been taken to the exploration of social issues. While popular films are made for the masses, these films generally target the intelligentsia.

MAINSTREAM CINEMA

Mainstream cinema or popular cinema is unabashedly loud, colorful, melodramatic, and fantastic. It provides the masses with a vicarious lifestyle where

dreams are realized, where good always destroys evil, where complex problems have simple solutions and where hate transforms to love. Although it may seem that popular cinema manipulates and influences its viewers, the relationship between the two is actually synergistic. While setting the mores and behavior of society, mainstream cinema also draws from and feeds upon contemporary society. To an extent popular films reflect the attitudes and perceptions of their times. This is evident in the transition that Indian films have been through over more than nine decades. Most popular movies have been influenced by the political scene and social mores and attitudes of their times. When films were launched by Phalke and other pioneers at the turn of the century, historical films relating to myths, legends and stories about famous kings and dynasties were very popular. The thirties and forties are recognized as the decades of social protests. Films like Franz Osten's *Achut Kanya* (The Untouchable Girl), V. Santharam's *Duniya Na Mane* (The World Does Not Believe), and Mehboob's *Aurat* (Woman) reflected the atrocities of the caste system and other evils associated with it. Such films made a strong plea against social injustices. The decade after India won independence, memorable films were produced with patriotic themes, portraying leaders who were moral, who had worthwhile goals and who were ready to sacrifice their lives for the country. Abbas's *Dharti Ke Lal* (Son of the Soil) and Vijay Bhatt's *Bharat Milap* (The Union of India) were the significant films of this decade. The mid-fifties saw the arrival of Satyajit Ray and his classic *Pather Panchali*. Indian cinema reflected the impact of neorealism in films like Bimal Roy's *Do Bigha Zameen* (An Acre of Land) and Rajkappor's *Jagte Raho* (Keep Awake). Films of the sixties and seventies were more escapist in nature. Romantic musicals and melodramas such as Dev Anand's *Guide* and B.R. Chopra's *Waqt* (Time) met the demands at the box office. The last two decades have witnessed a decadence in film themes. Films today reflect the corruption that has eaten into Indian society at all levels. That corruption is rampant is one of the most readily accepted statements that one can make in India. It is a social phenomenon of wide dimensions and has succeeded in sapping the morale of the people. As Shampa Bannerjee puts it, "the support systems that sustained the people of the subcontinent have been destroyed. Family values and spiritual connections have come loose and the glorious and pious past is forever lost." Film themes are now being dictated by this sad and strangely popular reality.

Current popular films thrive on depicting the decaying of the Indian Civil Service. The precedence of materialism and economic power in Indian society is conveyed through the depiction of the thoroughly corrupt official for whom personal comfort and gain are paramount. Service to the people and duty towards the country are considered to be idealistic, foolish. *Parinda* (Birds) shows how an honest police officer who raids the activities of an underworld criminal gang is ruthlessly killed while his colleague, who allows them to carry on their nefarious activities for a price, is promoted. The nexus between public officials, politicians and criminals is frequently portrayed on the silver screen.

The unquestionable authority of the government also makes for popular film themes. Since the government controls almost all vital areas of life, the power it holds is tremendous. This has led to various administrative actions in which the administrative authorities act outside the strict scope of law. A case in point is Govind Nihalini's *Aakrosh* (Cry of the Wounded). An upper caste lawyer, appointed for the defense of a

lower caste, illiterate tribal who is accused of killing his wife, discovers that the tribal has been falsely accused. His wife was raped and murdered by the local officials and politicians, but since they formed the power elite, they were beyond the reach of law. The helpless tribal husband accepts the accusation to protect his family. The film is a powerful depiction of how even justice is merely a pawn in the hands of the powerful. In Ramesh Sharma's *New Delhi Times*, a dedicated journalist, in attempting to find out those responsible for selling spurious liquor which resulted in several deaths, is exposed to the intrigues of the political world — murder, defections and blackmail. It is an excellent illustration of how government machinery is used at different levels by bureaucrats and politicians to cover up a case that could adversely affect the impending elections. The denouement of the plot is a commission set up by the government to look into the case and submit a report. This again is an obvious attack on the government's methods of sweeping issues under the rug.

As a result of widespread corruption, the police are called upon to act more swiftly, but it results in more abuse than positive use of power. The discretionary powers of arrest, search and interrogation have been abused by the police, which has contributed to the hostility between the police and the public. *Machiss* (Matchstick) portrays the extremely arbitrary and harsh treatment of two innocent lovers who are wrongly suspected of terrorist activities. Public servants in many such films are viewed by the audience as lawless themselves, and the antagonists. This image is tenuously tied to the reality outside the theaters. Public servants are no longer seen as the champions of the public cause.

Red tapism and incompetence are other attacks on the already beleaguered bureaucracy in Indian films. Most films, however, portray this in a lighter vein. The bureaucrat's table is shown to be cluttered with piles of dusty files, while he is spotted sitting behind it appearing to be totally consumed in work. When approached by a citizen with a problem or a complaint, he gets disgusted and irritated because he has been disturbed in the midst of something supposedly important. Often the individual is made to feel that the public official is doing him a favor by being attentive to his grievances. Lower rank police officers such as constables, more popularly known as "hawaldars," are always shown sleeping on their duty hours, waking up only to find out that the prisoner has escaped! Apart from humorous portrayals of the inept bureaucrat, there are films that reflect how administrative rules and regulations can have dangerous repercussions. In Maniratnam's *Roja* (Rose), for instance, a young cryptologist gets abducted by Kashmiri militants who want one of their terrorists to be released from jail in exchange for him. The cryptologist's wife encounters unnecessary administrative delays while her husband is held captive and is in danger of losing his life. The film is a depiction of how officers play by the book even though their actions can almost lead to a disaster. On the other hand, those very rules and regulations that present obstacles in the way of ordinary citizens and their problems function extremely efficiently for the powers that be. For the ordinary citizen, bureaucracy seems to exist and function only for the powerful. Administrative delays of this kind have led to rampant corruption in offices. It has given rise to dishonest practices like "speed money," where an officer is bribed to speed up a case. Orders that are passed on files are also held back till the applicant pays the appropriate gratification to the subordinate official concerned.

Although popular films are a reflection of the times in which they are produced , the prevailing reality is dramatized and exaggerated for different purposes. The prime reason for this is that many film makers in India cater to the masses, and they need action and drama to be riveted to their seats. When Indian film goers enter the theater, they want to be transported to a world of excitement, miracles, passion and dreams. In catering to the masses, mainstream cinema has presented society with a dominant image of the public servant as corrupt, lazy, inefficient , uncaring and impersonal.

BUREAUCRATIC STEREOTYPES

Film makers cash in on the negative stereotypes of the corrupt, incompetent and uncaring bureaucrat. The assault on the public servant in mainstream cinema is incessant and devastating. Most films feed on the negative and dysfunctional aspects of bureaucracy. The Indian audience loves the negative depiction of the government and its representative, appointed or otherwise. Although this image has been beaten to death, it continues to hold the interest of a movie-hooked nation, perhaps hoping that in some way it will turn the much dysfunctional bureaucracy around. Popular films do show the positive accomplishments of bureaucrats, but such accomplishments are more often inspired by personal reasons such as vengeance, hatred, anger and such, rather than the love for their duty or nation. Also the manner in which such officers are portrayed is almost messiah-like and is far removed from reality.

Most films typically feature members of the Indian civil service, such as police commissioners and secretaries. The armed forces and the judiciary also play significant roles in popular films. However, it is the quintessential police officer that has a guaranteed role in most films. One of three stereotypical images are usually presented in Indian films. The first image is that of the untrustworthy official who is entrenched within the corrupt system. On the outside he appears to be a sincere officer who is trusted by his superiors and colleagues. He, however, misuses the power and trust placed in him. It is under his jurisdiction that activities such as drug peddling, smuggling and running of brothel houses thrive. His conscience does not weigh on him, and ironically these activities are conducted by him while adorning the traditional khaki uniform, popularly known as the “wardi.” The wardi is a source of pride for Indian police officers and is considered to be almost sacred. As the plot thickens, his dubious nature is revealed. Although the director creates such a character, oftentimes he does not know what to do with it. In most films, he is a loose end only to be cursed and forgotten. At times he redeems himself by giving up his life in the fight for justice or changes his ways after the protagonist makes him see the light.

The second image is that of the over zealous police officer who takes the law in to his own hands. He is usually a young, hot blooded angry officer who avenges injustice where forces of justice have failed and takes the burden of society’s improvement solely upon himself. He is daring and ever ready to sacrifice his life in the struggle of good against evil. No sooner than he says “wardi ki kasam”(I swear by my uniform), can he take on a large gang of armed criminals single handedly, jump from skyscrapers without so much as a scratch, run faster than a moving train and what have you. His righteousness is his source of strength and his uniform his source of inspiration and pride. He has absolute faith in the law and believes that no one can escape it. This also leaves him open

and vulnerable to the frustrations inherent in the system within which he must operate. He gets outraged when injustice takes place and his ungovernable temper nearly costs him his job. He has a very supportive family that is neglected by him because of his duties. In most plots, the criminals get hold of his wife/girlfriend or children and he finds himself caught between his love for them and his duty. This particular image has been a big hit with the masses. It perhaps makes them feel compensated for the treatment meted out to them by officials in their everyday lives.

The third stereotypical image is that of the officer who plays by the book. He clings to the letter of the law no matter what the situation. An example of this is usually displayed in scenes when someone is in need of immediate medical attention while the official is more interested in completing the paper work. He is cold but not corrupt. He is not open to innovation and change. These officers are usually old and have conflicts with the younger recruits regarding working styles, values and approaches to problem solving. Usually, the senior officer relents and lets the enthusiastic young official have his way, realizing that times have changed and his manner of functioning does not yield the desired results. He is perceived by viewers as being an obstacle in the accomplishment of important objectives.

These stereotypes are reworked to an excess in popular films. While reducing complexity, they present a black and white picture of reality with no shades of gray.

PARALLEL CINEMA

Parallel cinema, also referred to as "art" cinema or the "new Indian cinema," defines itself by its rejection of the conventions of the commercial cinema. Such films deal with real issues and situations in actual locations as opposed to fiction. It does not have the trappings of its popular counterpart. The common man's description of art cinema, in one word, is "boring".

Bureaucracy does not receive as much attention in art films as it does in mainstream ones. The approach to its portrayal here is, however, softer, moderate and balanced. On this side of the spectrum, consideration seems to be given to the fact that public officials are not always involved in highly emotional, dramatic situations, and that not all of them are immoral and insensitive. Bureaucracy, its functioning and its relationship with the public are complex issues and cannot be portrayed as simply good or bad. Considering the gray zones involved, rather than portraying everything as black or white, is closer to reality than castigating the bureaucracy at large.

One such film that communicates the role of the bureaucracy in a balanced manner is that of the celebrated director, Satyajit Ray. *Ganashatru* (Public Enemy), an adaptation of Ibsen's play, shows the struggles of a government doctor, who in his capacity as a government officer as well as a doctor attempts to shut down a temple after discovering that its water is contaminated and can lead to an outbreak of illness in the town. The earnings of the temple fill up the pockets of the other bureaucrats and they thwart all his efforts to publicize the issue. The film serves as a reminder of the sensitive, sincere, dedicated face of bureaucracy, but at the same time does not turn a blind eye to its unethical side.

Contrary to the stereotypical image of the corrupt, inefficient bureaucrat, there are many honest, hard working officers who are genuinely concerned with improving public welfare. They often make great personal sacrifices which go unnoticed. Shyam Benegal's film *Manthan* (Churning of the Soul) is a pointer to the involvement of the bureaucracy in improving the life of the common man. A government official who is managing the setting up of a milk cooperative is transferred the moment it is realized by the political authorities that he is actually working for the betterment of the milkmen. The politicians and zamindars (landlords) oppose the formation of the cooperative because it would mean an end to their share of the milkman's earnings. The film is an example of how officials who are committed to a cause and to serving the people are alienated and sidelined. It shows how elected representatives violate the trust that people put in them and how they do not allow bureaucracy to function and produce the intended results.

Sukha (Drought) depicts the hard and honest work of the district head who camps in a drought affected village to bring relief and succor to the people. Despite adverse political pressure the official continues to work for the betterment of the people. The film flies in the face of much of the negative image of bureaucracy, i.e. being unresponsive and pliable by the politicians.

Parallel cinema thus produce works with serious reflections on contemporary society and do not attempt to escape reality. Clearly, they leave their audience with more questions than answers. This is one of the reasons why parallel cinema has never attained

the level of popularity with the masses that mainstream cinema has. It has never really managed to entice the Indian audience.

CONCLUSION

Although parallel cinema takes a more realistic and mature approach to presenting themes, it continues to cater to the intellect of the middle classes and holds no appeal for the common man. Mainstream Bollywood cinema, on the other hand, flourishes as a virtual empire of wonder and imagination. The excessive and unbalanced attack on bureaucracy may be an implicit message to the government to respond to the masses and their problems with honesty and dedication. Cinema can be a powerful medium to communicate to the bureaucracy the degree to which they have to reorient their approach and visibly demonstrate that they care. Even though films reflect reality, to a certain extent reality can also be influenced by films. If mainstream cinema can be used as a vehicle for reform, it would help to bridge the gap between the public servants and the people and restore faith in the government. As long as films continue presenting bureaucrats as immoral and inefficient, it will perpetuate and reinforce the negative perceptions that people already have about bureaucracy.

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The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Screen Bureaucrat
by
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The movie as a window on society is an established, if not classical, theme of academic studies (Jarvie,1978). The depiction of bureaucrats in Soviet cinema echoes the development in the political and economic life the country: it mirrors peoples' attitudes towards the authorities, towards civic rights and freedoms, changing values and ideas. From the 1920s to the early 1990s, the image of the bureaucrat on the Soviet screen made a full circle, coming back to its starting point. In both cases, it was echoing the popular attitude that the bureaucrat was not one of us--the popular folk--but rather one of them--a representative of the power structures, whose interests very rarely coincide with ours. The image of the heroic, or just decent, public servant that was common in the period of stability of the Soviet era was not totally abandoned; rather it became marginal and occupied secondary places in genre films.

Analysis of the image of the bureaucrat should be approached separately for different film genres. In the West (Braudy,1973; Warshow,1954; Bourget,1976), as well as in Soviet cinema, the genres had their rules. Although each followed the general conventions of its own genre, there were some peculiarities. For example, Soviet detective or action films had the following characteristics: the police were always good (no corruption); there were no individual bounty hunters or private investigators or maverick cops (that is, individualism was played down). Sometimes, however, they portrayed crooked and corrupt officials who, generally, were an exception to the rule. Soviet historical dramas usually softened the class context for the events before the 18th century (unless it was a national-liberationist movement, where class oppressors in conjunction happened to be foreign, or the story was concerning the latest czars). They also underscored the role of a charismatic leader, notwithstanding the fact that these people were feudal lords or princes. Or, there seemed to be "regional commercial specialization," with film studios in Baltic republics concentrating on crime and action (police) films and on stories happening in Europe, whereas the studios in the Caucasus republics focused on comedies, and studios in Central Asia on historical and revolutionary/adventure films. For the purposes of this essay, though, the image of a bureaucrat will be explored in two broad streams of drama and comedy, concentrating on the dynamics of the image, and their relation to the developments in the country.

The Mass Hero Stage: Bureaucrats as "Them"

This stage marks the beginning of the Soviet cinema, and in terms of movie techniques, ideology, and theory it is significant for the development of world cinema (e.g., Eisenstein,1929; Eisenstein, et al. 1930). Given the dictum by Lenin that "Cinema is the most important art form for us," Soviet directors and artists (the majority of them with revolutionary leanings prior to the October revolution) started to toil in the direction of persuading the masses of great accomplishments of the revolution. In dramatic, as well as documentary, films and newsreels the emphasis was on the mass hero in the context that the people's masses, under the leadership of the Communist party, created the new

history. Fine examples of such an art were Eisenstein's "Battleship Potemkin" and "October, The End of St. Petersburg" by Pudovkin, and to a certain extent even "The Earth" by Dovzhenko. Even though the latter ones were not as programmatic as Eisenstein's films, there was always something bigger and more important in the film than the fate of a single person--the city, the farm commune, the earth. Even documentary films had a drive for the non-personalized, pulsating with communal life accounts of events, such as in Vertov's "Man With a Movie Camera" (1929). Comedies as a genre were just developing.

Given this context, where was the bureaucrat? Almost nowhere. The bureaucrat was seen as a rudiment of the past, somebody who should not exist in the present and future. One of the most striking episodes depicting a bureaucrat is in "Battleship Potemkin," where the officers and the doctor on the ship are trying to force the sailors to eat rotten meat. Thus, they are placed on the "them" side of identification--it's not human, it's not "us." In a few comedies, if there is a bureaucrat he is someone who tries to carry out "the tricks of the past," something he learned during the previous czarist regime. The distinction is clear, and the bureaucrat is clearly on the side of corrupt authorities. This is not as someone who is scheming for his personal good and identifies himself as a bureaucrat, but rather as someone who without hesitation does what he is commanded to do, regardless of how evil it is. Where is the public servant--not the infamous bureaucrat, but the ordinary, honest, hard working public employee? Again, he or she is almost nowhere. The authorities are new in the country, and for the centrally directed propaganda machine it is not important to persuade the people of institutional structures, but to attend to the "routinization of charisma," in Weber's terms. This task is one of the main themes in the next stage.

The Emerging Individual Hero Stage

In the 1930s and 1940s, with Stalin's establishment at the top of its power, Soviet cinema, together with the country and arts in general, is becoming more institutionalized, and the emphasis is on the leader, usually a Communist party worker fighting anti-Soviet elements, or explaining ideology and organizing others. The doctrine of Socialist Realism is being established. Among its tenets are "partiinost" (i.e. the party line or ideology should necessarily be there) and "narodnost" (i.e. should be for and about the working class, who is understood as the vanguard of 'narod'--the people). It should not be experimental or "formal," but should depict "typical characters in typical circumstances" (which, according to Engels' definition, is the truth). Given that purges are carried out among artists, after the All-Union Creative Conference of Workers in Soviet Cinema in January 1935 (Leyda, 1983) a censorship apparatus is established, Soviet cinema is coming to an ideologically defined mode that continues for some twenty years. This is also the time of establishment of cinema in the republics of the Soviet Union. These studios start with filming of those works of national drama and novels that have class context, or stage historical dramas about defending the country.

A perfect example was Eisenstein's "Alexander Nevsky" in 1938, with the actor Cherkassov playing the role of charismatic prince fighting against German crusaders.

Even the music to the film, composed by world-famous Sergei Prokofiev, has ideological undertones. For example, the music accompanying the ride of German crusaders on the ice of Lake Onega has elements of German liturgy and is arranged under a classical orchestra, while the score accompanying the Russian militia (not regular troops, but rather a people's militia) has folk themes and folk orchestration. The prince is deliberately simple, without any aristocratic manners--he is the first among the equals, rather than a king. There are similar attempts in Georgia (Georgi Sahakadze) and Armenia (David-Bek). In this interpretation, the authority is not severed from the people--the leader is also a soldier, communication is direct--without bureaucratic barriers. So bureaucrats again do not emerge either in a positive or in a negative sense. In contemporary films, the emphasis is similar--positive bureaucrats are very active, very politicized (i.e. following the party line), very correct, not fully institutionalized; the bad ones are bad not because of the inherent characteristics of bureaucracy, but because they have the wrong (non-communist) ideology and are enemies of the people.

At the same time, this is the golden era of Soviet musical comedies (mostly by dir. Alexandrov), and here we see the emergence of a typical bumbling bureaucrat. As portrayed by actor Igor Ilinski in the film "Volga-Volga" (1938), this character was a mainstay for many decades after. This approach usually reduced the phenomenon of bureaucracy to singular inept individuals whose stupidity was easily overcome by the rest of the organization, which had both common sense and creative skills. The hit comedy of 1956, "The Carnival Night" (dir. Riazanov), although a film of a later period, has another vivid example of this character, again played by Ilinski.

During and after the war, films became more pompous and official, with more praise for Stalin, stressing the role of the party and ideology not only in public affairs, but also in personal relations (a good Communist could not cheat on his wife). In some sense, the only difference was that party officials were becoming more institutionalized, just working in factories and plants, and not creating everything from scratch. Or, in other words, in dramas charismatic figures became institutionalized, but were still very much politicized, and the comedies were still dominated by bumbling, but ultimately harmless, bureaucrats.

The Thaw

After Stalin's death, controls loosened. If before only a dozen feature films were produced every year, soon there was a rush into feature films. The period in Soviet history is known as the Thaw--the brief period of melting of the Soviet official ideological doctrine, with more freedom of expression, more debates, more freedom, until in the mid-sixties everything came back to the status quo. This was a period in which several important films were made, addressing issues that were taboo before. For example, in director Chukhrai's "Clear Skies" (1961), the focus was on a former fighting pilot who has been captured by Germans during WWII, and was trying to rehabilitate himself. The character, played by the actor Urbansky, was an individual who exemplified the society, an individual with too strong a social conscience. In another role, Urbansky played a charismatic, albeit controversial (e.g., romance on the side), Communist leader

(in dir. Raizman's film "The Communist" (1957). Representing Communist authorities in one of the Russian regions, he was building a country based upon his beliefs, completely consuming himself with blood and tears (including his own). In other words, the heroes were still larger than life, less institutionalized, but more human--not just proponents of ideology, but people with flesh and heart, with emotions, with burning social consciences.

Comedies generally produced the type of a bumbling bureaucrat that first appeared in "Volga, Volga." There were also a very few that got a satiric bite, though they were not shown widely. For example, in "The Bride from the Other World" (dir. Gaidai, 1959), a person cannot live peacefully and get married. By some stupid mistake a clerk has written somewhere that the hero is dead, and in the world of official papers and seals he, although present in flesh and blood, cannot persuade the bureaucrats around him that he is not dead. Or director Klimov laughed at rigid and absurd rules that summer camp leaders have created for kids in the film "Welcome, or Trespassing is Not Allowed" (1964).

Stagnation and the Common Hero

The sixties were the years of stabilization of the Soviet system. In the Brezhnev era, sometimes also referred as the Stagnation, the focus of the society shifted from heroics to everyday life. A new, particular Soviet film genre emerged--the so-called "industrial dramas"-- wherein the characters were examined in the environment of work settings, paying attention to fulfilling the 5-year Soviet plans, party directives, etc. The most significant difference from Western movies about corporate life was the emphasis on societal aspects of such issues. For example, if someone was cheating or not performing as he was supposed to, it was not bad simply because it was morally wrong--it was also wrong because it was hindering the development of the country; it had societal effects and thus was important for everyone.

In director Raizman's "Your Contemporary" (1968), the hero had the same last name as the character in the film "The Communist" (supposedly the son). But now he is a middle-aged, well-respected scientist-organizer of the chemical industry. He is not a revolutionary, but a doubting person, though again with a burning social conscience. The hero raises the issue of whether one should stop a project with big sunk costs, if there is a chance some other project may be better. The stream of such films continues in the seventies with director Mikaelyan's "Bonus" (1976), wherein a group of construction workers, together with their foreman, refuse to receive the bonus payment they are awarded for the job. Their argument is concerning the principles of organizing the industry, particularly healthy working relations. To a certain extent, the same happens in the genre of comedy; the hero is not larger than life anymore, but the tasks he sets are emanating from societal problems. For example, in the film "Beware of the Automobile" (dir. Riazanov, 1966), the hero is an ordinary guy with a "sharpened" sense of justice. He steals the cars of crooks, sells them and gives the money to orphanages; at that time "crooks" people who bought cars, not from their salaries and wages, but from "non-work income.")

From the seventies on, the focus is again the individual who tries to survive and live a decent life, but without all the burden of the world on his shoulders. For example, the hero of the film "Flights Awake and Flights Dreaming," is just fighting a mid-life crisis, trying to find a meaning in near-mechanical work and a disorganized personal life. In the comedy "Senior Robbers" (dir. Riazanov), two senior citizens are trying to do everything in order to stay at work (e.g., stealing a painting from Hermitage so that one of them--the retiring detective--can reveal the crime) and not to retire, since they cannot imagine themselves without the job. Another important film by director Raizman, "Private Life" (1982), touches upon the same issue in a more serious manner. The hero is a director of a large enterprise who has to rethink his life after retirement. Suddenly, he seems not needed, his private life is also not ideal, and for the first time in many years he does not have answers. Thus, a new status quo was achieved with regard to the portrayal of bureaucrats. Everybody more or less identified himself/herself with a bureaucrat/public employee (almost the entire population of the country were state employees), and since the focus is on these people, it is not negative. Rather, there was an attempt to understand their behavior, to see "what makes them tick," why they behave the way they do. Ills of the society were mostly addressed through the official satirical cinema-magazine of the Soviet Union, "Fital" (which means "wick"), which contained short sketches and documentary shorts.

Precursors of Perestroika

Many movies were put on the shelf (since they were not correct ideologically), such as Elem Klimov's "Agony," about Rasputin's rise to power, or had extremely limited showings, such as Riazanov's satire "Garage" (1980), and only 5 or 6 satirical movies were produced in 20 years (Tolstykh, 1993). At the same time, since the late 1970s, Soviet movies again became more open (Lawton, 1989). Films started to focus on problems, not only in the mode of socialist realism that always explicitly showed what to do, but also portrayed a stifling environment in the country (sometimes allegorically, as in Mark Zakharov's "That Munchausen" (1979), or just raised issues of something gone wrong.

For example, "Garage" deals with problems of distribution, and necessary people and connections that are needed to achieve organizational ends, as well as who gets what within the organization. The collective of a Scientific-Research Institute has to decide how to distribute a limited amount of garages to employees. Initially it is proposed to exclude "not very important" employees. When the rank-and-file revolts and demands that ones not working in the organization be excluded from the distribution, the deputy director is forced to agree with them. But she also explains why these people were coopted into that project in the first place "to ensure that things happen that otherwise would not."

Georgian director Eldar Shengelia's film "Blue Mountains or Unbelievable Story" (1983) exposes rigid bureaucratic practices inside a state-owned publishing house. A young writer, who was asked by the director of the publishing house to present a story, brings

his manuscript after several months of intensive work. He distributes typed copies of his writing among the members of the editorial board and is trying to get a response from them. After bringing his "Blue Mountain" story in early autumn, the author is traveling around the publishing house throughout the winter, spring, and summer... During his visits he watches the same situation every time. Some people can never be found in their offices. Others play chess, drink coffee or have endless talks about anything but work. The director is always invited to countless meetings outside the publishing house; he is always under time pressure and cannot solve problems. One of the editors is constantly struggling with a decorator demanding to remove a picture that hangs over his head. Another editor is on vacation during the entire year. Everybody is busy with something, but nobody is doing anything concerning the major publishing house business. And nobody manages to read the "Blue Mountains" story in order to take a decision about its publication. Meanwhile, in the course of the year almost all the copies of the story are lost, and by the time the director schedules the discussion nobody has a full original version and nobody has read the entire story.

Perhaps, the most important precursor of Perestroika films is Georgian director Tengiz Abuladze's "Repentance" (Gabrielian, 1995). The powerful film was shot in 1984, but due to its "wrong" political and ideological content was not released until Soviet Union was well into Gorbachev's perestroika in 1986-1987. "Repentance" was the first film that openly addressed some of the "dark spots" of Soviet history (at least for the Soviet viewers)-- the reign of absurd, omnipotent and ubiquitous terror of the Stalinist era-- in a frankly political manner and through the images and philosophy of Orthodox Christianity. Bureaucracy here is treated as a systemic evil, as the nuts and bolts of a giant killing and oppressing machine that clearly is not on the side of the people. It is shown in many shades and forms, and all without mercy. For example, there is an episode when Varlam (the main and negative hero), the newly appointed (maybe even elected) mayor, is receiving the delegation of citizens appealing to stop the use of a medieval Christian monastery as a scientific laboratory because the lab ruins the temple. In this episode, actor Avtandil Makharadze (Varlam) displays the widest range of bureaucratic/official metamorphosis-- from tragically uninformed but caring; to understanding but having no other choices; to educated and artistic but burdened with administration; and finally, to powerful, confident and threatening enforcer of statutes, one that enjoys his power and shows it.

In another episode, Varlam (not yet on the top of pyramid), brings some letter accusing an artist of ideological wrongdoing (or more precisely, of not being devoted to the party's causes) to his boss, who is also the artist's teacher. Varlam refers to that fabricated letter, full of hatred and envy, as *vox populi*, and urges action. When the boss tears down the letter, calling it nonsense, Varlam subtly threatens him on some counts of accountability and negligence: being unresponsive to the "will of people" as expressed via public opinion (responsiveness); destroying a document that has been registered in thousands of important registers (legal accountability); and not working hard in the direction of a political goal-- revealing the enemies of the people (political accountability).

Movies with critical attitudes were facilitated during the Perestroika years, when the ills of Soviet society were addressed more directly and openly. Perestroika and the Return of "Us" and "Them"--Gorbachev's policy of openness, or limited freedom of speech--opened the floodgates and a stream of movies openly criticizing the Soviet system were produced. First, there were movies cautiously criticizing some characteristics of the Soviet system, with an aim of improvement. Eventually, though, they started more and more to look like an indictment. Comedies became darker and more grotesque (Horton, 1993), and dramas started to treat wrongdoings of authorities with a passion for swift prosecution. Even the detectives (i.e. crime stories) began to concentrate on corruption and abuse of power (especially in Central Asia), linking it to drugs, prostitution, and all other social ills.

For example, the film "The Murder" (the first episode of the serial named "Corruption," dir. Polyakov, (1989)) exposes corruption among high level officials in law enforcement agencies. It is a story of an investigation made during one day by the Moscow Criminal Police Chief Detective. He spends the day in a luxurious apartment where the dead tenant is found. Her husband is a construction company boss involved in illegal activities who is paying a lot of the money he makes to the top level law enforcement officers that serve as his "cover." By the end of the day, after investigation of the site of the crime and questioning of people around it, the detective is convinced that the husband is the murderer of his own wife. Meanwhile those who are covering up for him make every effort to stop the investigation.

The gradual change in treatment of bureaucracies and bureaucrats is more obvious in the genre of comedy. The developments in the films of director Yuri Mamin are quite interesting in this respect. His first short film, "Neptune's Holiday" (1986), is a light-hearted story about outrageous window-dressing, when the authorities, in order to impress visiting Swedish guests, declare that all the people in a certain village have a habit of swimming in icy water. What follows afterwards is carnival of absurdity, when the whole village has to pretend that swimming in the icy water is an old habit. Mamin's next film, "The Fountain" (1990), is about a building (an apartment complex or a housing project) that is being neglected and is in an active process of decay. The tenants neither can nor want to do something about it. The film is darkly grotesque, with the building serving as a metaphor for the country. For example, when the roof is failing, it is not fixed, but is temporarily supplemented with a lot of banners and posters that have communist slogans on them.

Other directors went in the direction of showing what was essentially known and abnormal, but was perceived by the society as something ordinary. Konstatin Voinov's film "The Hat" (1989) is an adaptation of a classic satirical novel by a famous dissident author Vladimir Voinovich. It studies the social implications of administrative distribution of goods and services. The state-supported Writers' Union decides to distribute hats to its members, who are formally not classified into bureaucratic ranks (i.e., there are no senior writers and junior writers; all are writers). Because of limited resources, though, they have to classify the writers, and according to these grades allocate the hats. The hero, an ordinary writer, is insulted and infuriated when he is given the

lowest possible reward-- a hat from the fur of an ordinary cat. He protests unsuccessfully to upgrade his status (which now is measured by the quality of hats), but the officials in the Writer's Union do not like it, and soon he ends up in a hospital with a stroke. The only way he can get a better hat is through connections. His wife turns for help to her lover-- a military Marshal (the equivalent of the four-star general in the US), who influences the issue through a different type of lever.

In the film "The City of Zero" (1988), director Karen Shahnazarov takes a different route. At first glance, this parable-black-comedy-grotesque carnival is surrealist and absurd, but what it actually shows is how much real Soviet life was surreal and close to absurdity. The first scene is about an engineer on a business trip to a provincial town, in which he discovers a very bizarre world beneath the walls of a local factory. Later, despite all his efforts, he cannot escape this provincial, peculiar town that continues its own course regardless.

The most anti-bureaucratic film ever made in the former Soviet Union is by the famous director Riazanov—"A Forgotten Tune for the Flute" (1988). It is a romantic comedy, as well as a biting satire against the prevailing order. A high-ranking official in a fictional super-regulatory agency--the Leisure Time Directorate (a not so subtle reminder that bureaucracy tries to regulate whatever is possible), falls in love with an ordinary nurse and has to choose between his career (the father of his almost-estranged wife is a very powerful official) and love. The opening episode of this, perhaps the most explicit anti-bureaucratic film of Soviet cinematography, tries to convey the general feeling of the Soviet people in 1988 -- that bureaucracy, removed from the everyday life of the ordinary people, was arrogant and impersonal, out of touch with the common citizen. This message is communicated both through a song and visually. The song relates what the bureaucrats do for a living and why they are so proud of doing nothing but pushing paper. Visually, it shows how the morning traffic is stalled at a busy crossroads, because the car of some high functionary has to cross it without any delays, and people in public transportation are contrasted with officials who are driven to work in their office cars. In another episode, a high-ranking bureaucrat is tortured by a nightmare that he is out of work and he and his colleagues have to beg for a living, since there is nothing useful that they are able to perform. In the final scenes, after a heart attack, he is saved by love.

Others took a harsher stand towards the future of bureaus and bureaucrats. One of the best examples in this line of work is a dark comedy. In this surrealistic and symbolic retelling of the Russian classic, "A History of a Certain Town" by Mikhail Saltykov-Schedrin, director Sergei Ovcharov superimposed the satiric history of the provincial Russian town of the 18th century onto the 70-year history of the Soviet Union. As a result, satirical images of 19th century officials are reincarnated into different periods of Soviet life quite convincingly. The narrator alternately represents different bosses of the town of Glupov, or Foolstown. In this parade of eternal bosses, the 18th century "Organchik" Brudastiy (called so because he knew only one phrase, as the organchik (a music box) plays only one melody) appears as an ailing and non-permissive party boss of the Brezhnev-Chernenko era. The impersonal character of bureaucracy was not considered to pertain only when dealing with individuals. The object of impersonal

treatment could have been whole classes of people, nationalities, or ethnic groups. In another episode the author tries to convey the message of the menacing impersonality of the bureaucratic system primarily through visual means, enhancing the alienated character of the events by using a modern computer-generated score. Imitating the newsreel style of the 1930s, this surrealistic episode refers to a peculiar Soviet experience. It shows how an army of stone-faced bureaucrats in three-piece suits and ties, axes in their hands, destroyed villages, managed the whole country as a labor camp, erected gigantic industrial and public works projects literally on the blood and flesh of the workers, and continued to lead the people to inevitable doom. In the end, the town of Glupov is swept from the face of the earth.

The line was crossed. Authorities, most often portrayed and understood as bureaucrats, were seen as "them," and the movies called for their removal. This sentiment echoed the feelings of the vast majority of Soviet people. The indictment was clear. The history has come to a full circle--the bureaucrats, as in the 1920s, were seen as "others," not people like us or heroes that we should feel empathy for.

The Grim Tones of Post-Soviet Movie Scene

After the breakup of the former Soviet Union, as almost everything else in the country(ies), the movie industry, under the pressure of American films and video, is basically in shambles (Varoli, 1997a). There is a postmodern "absence of grand narratives," disarray in themes and orientations. Some films dare to go in directions never tried before, such as questioning not only the wisdom of Stalin and other Soviet leaders (which was done before), but also such historical figures as Peter the Great (Varoli, 1997b). Some efforts are earnest and dull (commercially non-appealing attempts of figuring out what happened, such as the famous Riazanov's latest films). In the beginning there were some films continuing the traditions of the Perestroika period, such as the "Code Of Dishonor" (1993, director Vsevolod Shilovsky). This movie is set to expose the way that the Communist Party and the KGB transferred money, gold and other valuables to the West in order to finance operations abroad and to put the money in illegal personal accounts. The basic idea of the movie is pronounced several times from the screen by the Communist Party and KGB officials (even after the failed 1991 coup d'etat): "Nothing has changed for us."

The Code of Dishonor, though, is rather an exception. Interestingly, after such a peak of interest in the perestroika years, bureaucracy as such has been out of the focus of moviemakers. Under the heavy influence of American genre films, a lot of action films are produced. What dominates here is chernukha (i.e. black things, everything in black), where one hero single-handedly overcomes a lot of organized crime figures and corrupt officials. Most often, the heroes are tough guys who do not have a regular job, but can flex quite a few muscles and shoot straight. Bureaucrats, or public officials, are just a decoration, most often negative, in order to underscore how good the main hero is. Recently, there is an attempt to escape from chernukha through light films (Ramsey, 1997), beginning with erotic films. Soviet or post-Soviet movies now are not as politicized, as sharp, or as preoccupied with power and bureaucracy. New local

peculiarities of genres are being developed, and many aspects of movie aesthetics are not yet settled. With regard to bureaucracy, though, one thing is clear: under market incentives, by and large bureaucrats are portrayed as handicaps, something that has to be overcome. The indictment is not as clear, as global and as damning as during the Perestroika years. Still, it is rather negative.

ENDNOTES

If the film focuses on a certain profession, or a person, usually the treatment of the hero is more positive. For a more positive portrayal of journalists in TV movies (as opposed to big-screen movies), since the viewers do not like to watch a story about a negative hero, see Weintraub (1997). For interconnectedness of the terms "bureaucrats" and "politicians" in a Soviet-type of system, see Kornai (1992).

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A Forgotten Tune for the Flute

(Mosfilm, 1987)

Reviewed by Iryna Illiash

If you ask a person from the former Soviet Union what the best Soviet film of the *Perestroika* period is, the answer will most certainly be, "A Forgotten Tune for the Flute." So, what makes this film so remarkable? Two things. First of all, it's a romantic story about love -- how it unexpectedly enters people's lives and lightens up their souls, how it makes them tremble with overwhelming emotions and do silly things, how it elevates people above their ordinary and predictable selves and wakes up feelings and impulses long ago buried under the layers of conventionality, uniformity, mediocrity and hypocrisy. On the other hand, *A Forgotten Tune for the Flute* is one of the most explicit anti-bureaucratic films of the Soviet cinematography. Its director Eldar Riazanov, renown for his satirical pictures deriding absurdities of the Soviet way of life, condensed his more than thirty-year experience of surviving censorship, arbitrariness, tastelessness and conservatism of the Ministry of Culture's bureaucrats and captured it in this film.

The plot of the film revolves around a middle-aged, conveniently married careerist Lenny Filimonov, who one day, after having been hospitalized with a minor heart attack, finds himself in love with an attending nurse Lida. Lida's humanism and integrity sharply set off the depth of Lenny's moral degradation, as he, former flutist, traded off his talent for the career of a high-ranking bureaucrat, preoccupied solely with the advancement to the very top of the hierarchical ladder and indiscriminate in means to secure this advancement. Loving Lida is incompatible with his career and brings it on the brink of ruin. Facing the choice between true love and the next rank Filimonov is tormented by personal demons.

Filimonov's story is a framework within which Eldar Riazanov depicts and denounces the bureaucratic environment conducive of such personality's degradation.

An intense, anti-bureaucrat 'bombardment' begins from the first takes of the film. It is achieved by a number of ways.

From the very beginning we are immersed into hectic rush of a typical morning of yet another typical working day. The takes of the early haste are accompanied by a professional but cold and impersonal tone of radio programs among which the weather forecast is the only one that relates to everyday life. In such a way Riazanov introduces us to a stagnant, uncaring, and alien world of bureaucratic institutions. By constantly changing the camera's focus he shows different ways in which different people go to work: while common citizens are cramped in public transportation, Lenny and his like drive their own cars, higher officials drowse in spacious auto, being driven by personal chauffeurs, and the highway police stops all the traffic on a busy intersection in order to let the black limousine of a very high functionary pass by without delays. The message is clear: the higher the rank of the so-called 'representative of people' is, the farther from people's lives he has alienated himself.

The pause, when everything has frozen in anticipation of the big boss to pass, is filled with the camera snatching out headlines of newspapers people are reading on their way to work: "Do not Waste Time," "Work with Acceleration," "Acceleration Factor," "Don't Lag Behind at the Starting Line," and "Boldly on to Perestroika!". This obvious discrepancy between dragging stillness of the moment and invocatory calls for action adds another characteristic to bureaucracy: its duplicity, when actions of officials conflict with their words.

The impression from this episode is further enhanced by a bureaucrats' song playing in the background, that combines a beautiful, chamber melody with quiet words full of explosive meaning and sarcasm:

"We don't plow,
Or build, or sow.
We are being proud
Of our society aloud.
In-going and out-going papers -
That's what makes our day.
And we're here to stay...
Our offices are like tanks,
We'll not be run aground.
Nothing to be permitted!
Everything's to be refused!
Safe in our paper lairs,
We won't be scared
By restructuring.
We're the vital end
Of a tremendous
Apparatus."

After the traffic has been renewed, the emphasis of the film shifts from the large-scale panorama of the city of bureaucrats to the detailed account of activities of just one bureaucratic agency where the protagonist happens to struggle up his career ladder - The Leisure Time Directorate (caricature of the Ministry of Culture). In this agency, represented by its chairman, an old reactionary Yaroslav, and four members of the Board, bureaucrats "make their days" by preoccupying themselves with the question whether they have "done everything possible to fill in the leisure time of the citizenry" in order to minimize it. They "fill in" their working time by discussing such initiatives as the one of the Leisure Reading Department. Namely, it proposes "launching an anti-wastepaper drive" to put an end to the common practice of bringing in as wastepaper ideological literature with the view of exchanging it for pulp fiction (as the former costs next to nothing, it has been bought in political bookshops by kilos). Having agreed that this phenomenon should be dealt with mercilessly, the functionaries discuss a wide range of measures, from general and vague "rousing the public" and "sounding an alarm," to more concrete -- "setting up control posts at the exchange centers" and "drawing up the list of books prohibited for exchange."

Among other no less significant issues that call for immediate attention of the functionaries, are: figuring out what to do with the Tambov chorus erroneously invited to a dancing competition and deciding where "to draw the line to freedom." In this regard it has been suggested "to develop instructions for the regional offices that will clearly state what the citizenry may do in its leisure time, and what it may not do."

No wonder, with the working schedule of such intensity, a lot of time in the office is spent on gossiping, spying on one another, intriguing, interfering with affairs of others, and spreading rumors.

Realizing that they are engaged in idiotic, useless activities, the Leisure Time Directorate bureaucrats have learned how to conceal their true feelings. In some matters though they seek each other's support and reassurance. They share with each other their fears of a possible liquidation of their 'outfit' (and what will happen to them then? - since they "don't plow or build, or sow"). They also are unanimous in apprehending perestroika.

It is felt throughout the film that perestroika did take ground from under bureaucrats' feet. Not once they complain, "It has truly become most difficult to carry on." They dissociate themselves from the dramatic changes that take place in the society ("This notorious perestroika is just a lot of talk. They've destroyed the old and created nothing new."), refer to democracy as a disaster that has caused general panic and state of psychosis and may even result in "elections of the members of the Board."

Nevertheless, striving to survive, bureaucracy quickly adapts to the new conditions, its methods become better veiled by cordial speeches and seemingly caring attitudes. Lenny, better than anybody else in the film, embodies the features of this new bureaucratic type. He is courteous and articulate, clever and well-educated, good-looking and self-assured. In the face he extends a helpful hand to various artists, shows understanding, offers encouragement and receives their gratitude and respect, but behind their backs he is the one who kills their creative endeavors. The episode with the medical association amateur theater company offers a good example of his style. Having told the actors that he allows them to stage a modern adaptation of "Inspector General" by Gogol (as "It is our duty to support all that is talented, creatively unexpected and original"), he immediately gives orders to his deputy that "there should never be another performance." Despite his assurances, "We never ban anything, we merely offer suggestions," his real convictions remain unchanged: "Nothing to be permitted! Everything's to be refused!"

The episode at the Art Fair is even a better demonstration of new managerial styles bureaucracy has adopted under the pressure of the Soviet society's democratic transformation. In anticipation of problems from this extremely popular event, brought to life by perestroika, the officials from the Leisure Time Directorate decide to give it "the once-over." They roam among artists and their works, sincerely aghast by the "eruption" of democracy they've found there, call the fair a gathering of profiteers, even

"worse than sex", and discuss what can be done in this respect. One of the Board members suggests that they call his friend, a former tankman, who's in charge of bulldozers.¹ Realizing that the time of bulldozers is gone, Surova, chief of the Leisure Reading Department, reasons, "We resort to other means now: we'll invite some art critics over. They'll be more effective than bulldozers," -- it is as if bureaucracy itself is now looking to the West for new practices of governance. Another chief comments, "The only way to curb free initiative is to organize and guide it."

This thought is echoed in the first speech Lenny delivers as the new chairman of the Board, when he hypocritically says, "The trouble with our Arts is they've always been controlled." The message here is: bureaucracy will never let people freely express themselves in any way they want to. Whatever it calls it: 'control' or 'guidance' (to keep with the times), -- bureaucracy will always exercise destructive interference with the free spirit.

Riazanov's satire against bureaucracy is multi-faceted. There is nothing in the life of agencies he overlooked. One such facet he depicts is types of bureaucratic careers. From this point of view, Lenny and his deputy, as different as they are, are typical examples of nepotism, protectionism, corruption, and arrogance.

Lenny is a person who once possessed a talent himself and, judging from the facts (after graduation from the Conservatory he went on to graduate school, then was offered a position of a flutist with a symphony orchestra), this talent has been recognized. Then he marries a daughter of a very high-ranking official to boost a much better paying and rewarding bureaucratic career, turning from being an artist to the one who 'controls' or 'guides' artists. When we meet Lenny in the film, his omnipotent father-in-law has already pushed him up as far as the Board member and arranged for him to be nominated "to replace that old ass Yaroslav." Lenny nearly messes things up by his romance with Lida, but facing the choice -- love or career -- he chooses in favor of the latter. Eventually, his father-in-law "puts out feelers," presses right levers, and Lenny becomes the new chairman of the Leisure Time Directorate.

At least Lenny has an appropriate background and education to be put to manage culture and to be hoped to produce sensible judgements. But what can one expect from a man who has begun his career in culture as a District Party Secretary's driver? And yet, the curriculum vitae of this man is typical for the period when destinies of people of the Arts and Science depended on the ignorance of bureaucrats. The deputy's former boss, when promoted, has "stuck the man in" as an inspector in the Cultural Department, thus launching his ascent.² Now, when it was Lenny's time to be promoted, the man came to him asking a reward for his loyalty and reasoning that this is in their mutual interests:

¹ Here the filmmakers allude to a similar event from the Soviet history.

² Apparently, the views on governance espoused by Soviet leaders were consonant with the ones proclaimed by President Jackson when providing ideological grounds for his "spoils" system: "The duties of all public offices are... so plain and simple that men of intelligence may readily qualify themselves for their performance" (as quoted in Rabin et al. (eds.), 1998, *Handbook of Public Administration*, 2nd ed., p. 60).

Deputy: "I need you in Yaroslav's office."
Lenny: "What's it to you?"
D.: "Then I'll get yours."
L.: "Are you sure?"
D.: "You need a team you can rely on, right?"
L.: "Can I rely on you?"
D.: "As long as you're in power."

On the 'inauguration' day the Deputy approaches Lenny with congratulations. "And I congratulate you," replies Lenny. "Thanks for having faith in me," answers the Deputy.

Another facet of Soviet bureaucracy that Eldar Riazanov aptly catches is the distribution of privileges in a society where there are no privileged classes. 'People's servants' have spacious apartments in prestigious, guarded buildings, hospitals and ambulatory clinics serving only their agencies, tennis courts and personal beauticians. Their refrigerators are full of expensive gourmet foods³, such as black and red caviar, salmon and sturgeon, cognac and wine, which they get as a supplement to compensate for their demanding jobs. In contrast, those whom they serve live in communal houses, go to work by overcrowded public transportation and consider as a delicatessen fried potatoes with pickles.

As we've seen it with cars in the opening episode, the bureaucrats' privileges are strictly ranked. One of Lida's friends observes about Lenny after he has become the chairman, "He has a chauffeur, a black Volga, and all the trimmings. And all for selling out on you."

The extent of recognition of authority depends on the amount of real power bureaucrats have. Although the formal etiquette is being observed, no one actually respects or fears Yaroslav as they know that his time has run out. This is the very reason why nobody goes openly against Lenny -- they feel the power of his father-in-law behind him and recognize him as the one who'll soon replace Yaroslav.

Lenny's father-in-law, who "has reached the top of the ladder now," is the locust of real power in the film. The reverent way everybody speaks about or with him is indicative of his unquestioned authority. To convey the impression of the man's importance, the filmmakers never show his face, only the lower part of it.

Bureaucratic power, as reflected in the film, is two-dimensional. Along with the official power channels there exist numerous unofficial ones through which functionaries exert pressure on each other or offer trade-offs. Lenny's promotions or his being able to resume construction of the Directorate's new building are the results of his father-in-law's pulling on different power levers. Asked by comrade Surova, Leisure

³ These goods were in shortage, and were not in free sale, but were distributed in special stores at below-market prices.

Time Reading Department chief, whose nephew has been expelled from the Drama Institute for disguising as a public order squad member and blackmailing 'loose' couples in the woods (or, as Surova puts it for "upholding our moral standards"), Lenny calls the rector and in a friendly chat restores the guy as a student. The philosophy underlying this practice is expressed in the Russian proverb "One hand washes the other."

The nearness of the end of the Soviet bureaucratic rule is conveyed in the film in several ways. First of all, it is achieved through the nightmares that hunt the functionaries of the Leisure Time Directorate. In these nightmares, where they are devoid of the protection of their offices, they see themselves as helpless and useless anti-societal types, having neither appropriate skills nor knowledge necessary for a creative, worthy activity, and being reduced to the state of beggary. Secondly, it is achieved through the overwhelming feeling of tiredness that seizes Lenny in the end and forces him to admit, "So many people just waste their lives -- filling out passes, guarding nothing -- ...I don't want to chase the chorus from Tambov across the country. I want to be doing active, useful work. I don't want to be involved in this insanity anymore." Lenny's words, "The people cannot be outsiders... But we can," are the final disclosure of bureaucracy and its verdict at the same time.

In the final scenes of the film Lenny, now the newly appointed chairman of the Board, conducts his first briefing, delivering a long, hypocritical, substanceless speech. He looks out of the window and sees Lida exiting the Directorate building. The pain of the loss and senselessness of the sacrifice become so acute and apparent that Filimonov suffers a major heart attack and nearly dies. But (love conquers all, after all) Lida has not gone too far yet not to be able to return and save him, not as a nurse, but as a loving woman who prays to God and asks him not to take her beloved away from her. And God has heard...

And though the question about the future of the protagonists is left open, the acuteness of Lenny's feelings of love and loss symbolizes that a new morality is being born, morality that places love over career and honesty over success and that ensures a melody for the flute is not forgotten.

A Forgotten Melody for the Flute can be used in the classroom when studying public organizations, especially Weber's ideal type bureaucracy and Merton's analysis of its dysfunctions. The film offers examples of such negative aspects of bureaucracy as "trained incapacity," "red tape" and formalism. It highlights different issues of bureaucratic career and tenure, contributes to our understanding of the development of an internal social organization within bureaucracy, as well as raises numerous ethical questions of serving the public interest.

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Charlie Chaplin's Modern Times Reviewed by Shelley Rice

Who would have guessed that six decades after the debut of Charlie Chaplin's film "Modern Times," the themes it exposed would parallel concerns we have now? Maybe everything moves in repeating cycles, and we have returned to "Modern Times." Maybe we never learn and we just keep repeating patterns. The themes seem so timely, so applicable.

Indeed, we are living in modern times. Modern times always occur in the present moment, punctuated by technological advances that make aspects of life easier. Modern times have things people of earlier times did not have, just as our time. Some of the parallels between our modern times and the film "Modern Times" are: unemployment, homelessness, police brutality, drug abuse and misuse, the swell of prisons, poverty, juvenile delinquency, runaway youth, foster care, and technological experimentation.

The film opens with a title proclaiming: "Modern Times is a story of industry, of individual enterprise-humanity crusading in the pursuit of happiness."⁴ Then there is a shot of sheep rushing through a chute. "This associative editing makes the metaphor clear: modern men are like sheep."⁵ The next shot cuts to an assembly line. This image of sheep rushing is analogous to people rushing to work packed in subways or in cars and buses during rush hour traffic.

A film critic at the time of release of "Modern Times" recognized its theme as "automation, the assembly line, unemployment and the world crisis...[of] the "modern times" in the early Thirties."⁶

Technological Experimentation

Scientific Management techniques and new technology were introduced in "Modern Times." If you watched the film you might agree that, "The most outstanding scene is that involving the feeding machine for which Charlie, as Tramp, is both guinea pig and victim."⁷ An inventor persuades the boss he can make more money and gain time by installing a machine so the workers don't have to take a lunch hour. The feeding machine can feed the workers automatically, without any loss of time, and with a great deal of economy for the owners. However, the machine is not practical enough. It feeds

⁴ Charles M. Berg for Magill's Survey of Cinema, Edited by Frank N. Magill, Saalem Press, NJ, p. 1134

⁵ Charles M. Berg, p. 1134

⁶ George Sadoa, *Dictionary of Films*, Translated and editing by Peter Morris, University of California Press, Berkley, CA, 1965, p. 224-225

⁷ George Sadoa, p. 225

all right, but it is too complicated and too expensive to operate.⁸ Charlie was strapped down while the machine fed him automatically. “Trapped inside the feeding device, a tempting meal becomes a mechanized nightmare.”⁹ Something goes wrong -- he is fed steel nuts, soup is spilled on him, and he is pelted with food.

This scene actually does not seem that bizarre/unusual today. It is necessary to test new equipment despite the possibility of a malfunction. The many conveniences we take for granted were fine-tuned by testing. Unfortunately, sometimes tragedies occur during the testing of a new this or that intended to help us to do thus and so; frightening examples are accidents at nuclear facilities, or explosions/crashes of experimental equipment. Administrators try to decide which new/improved technology will give the most benefit for the least effort and cost.

The administrator in “Modern Times” had concerns similar to those of administrators today: to determine the most efficient and productive way to increase production, achieve company goals, or meet projected outcomes. Workers know that the more a person does the more others expect; theorists have labeled workers’ responses to that idea as soldiering/work avoidance. In “Modern Times,” the boss was trying to get more out of the worker. “Modern Times” was an exaggerated illustration of just how organizations try to increase work output/production. One reviewer felt that, “For the first time an American film was daring to challenge the superiority of an industrial civilization based upon the creed of men who sit at flat-topped desks and press buttons demanding more speed from tortured employees.”¹⁰

Big Brother

The boss (Big Brother) is overseeing work activities by big screen TV. Big screen television is a product of our modern time and not of the thirties. “Modern Times” was ahead of its time by displaying a “fiction” that became reality; thereby, it is an applicable depiction of modern conveniences used today. Even then critics recognized the “effective shots of the boss barking commands through a television system similar to that used by George Orwell for Big Brother in Nineteen Eighty-Four.”¹¹

Dysfunction of Worker

Our protagonist, the Tramp played by Chaplin, is faced with the task of confronting a world where even less eccentric and more ambitious individuals are having a hard time; he experiences a series of disasters.¹² The regimentation of his work causes psychosis of sorts. Tramp becomes a madly moving automaton; human motions have become

⁸ George Sadoa, p.225

⁹ Charles M. Berg, p. 1135

¹⁰ Robert Forsythe, *New Masses*, v.18, February 18, 1936, p.29

¹¹ Charles M. Berg, p. 1137

¹² *Time*, February 17, 1936, v. 27, p.45

mechanized. Everywhere he sees nuts; he chases after them.¹³ The work created a nervous disorder/breakdown/compulsive behavior which some might attribute to the fatalities that have been occurring around the country. Former employees return to their old place of employment and shoot anyone in sight after they first attempt to get their supervisor. This phenomenon is most associated with postal workers.

Labor Protest

There were rumors that Chaplin had “taken sides in the class struggle-and taken...the right side.”¹⁴ In “Modern Times,” Tramp unknowingly leads a labor parade for which he is arrested.

Police Brutality

Chaplin, the film maker, exploits use of policemen. An unemployed man, father of three, was shot by the police and police are shown pounding upon protesters. It is unfortunate that the negative image of police killing innocent people persists. The recent shooting of Amadou Diallo¹⁵ supports the notion that police are out of control. The police of our time continue to be chastised for abusing suspects in custody and for shooting unarmed people who later were found to have done nothing wrong. What will happen to the children left without a caregiver?

The Swell of Prisons

Tramp was arrested for his participation in a labor demonstration. After he goes to jail and begins to settle into his life therein, he is pardoned. Tramp becomes acclimatized to the jail. “[T]he world of criminals is kinder and more considerate than the regime of capitalist rationalization.”¹⁶ He desires to remain imprisoned rather than face homelessness, hunger, and other uncertainty. After his release from jail, he longs for the comfort and security of his life at the jail.¹⁷ Tramp needed steady meals, shelter, and possibly health care. “His desire to get away from the cruel world is so strong that he deliberately gets himself arrested. There are groups of people in our society who do this. Some homeless commit crimes at the onset of winter’s colder weather to get off the street; while some mentally ill confess to many things they did not do to get off the street. Many feel safer inside of jail than out on the streets. When Tramp was released from prison, he had nowhere to go and nothing productive to do. It is similar to the situation some slaves found themselves in when they were told they were free. Because they had

¹³ B. Shumiatski, *The New Masses*, v. 16, September 24, 1935, p. 30

¹⁴ Mark Van Doren for *The Nation*, v. 142, no. 3685, February 19, 1936, p. 232

¹⁵ Amadou Diallo, 22, was killed by police in a fury of 41 bullets outside his Bronx, New York apartment house on February 4, 1998. He was unarmed and had no criminal record. His death drew national attention.

¹⁶ B. Shumiatski, p. 30

¹⁷ Charles M. Berg, pp. 1134-1135

no place to go or means for sustaining themselves, many felt they might as well stay with the master.

Drug Abuse and Misuse

“Modern Times” even made a statement about drugs. Nosepowder (a drug) was in the possession of one of the prisoners. When Tramp unknowingly took a whiff of it, he obtained unbounded strength. Surely, this picture parallels our times. We have heard of prisoners having access to drugs in our prisons and of prisoners exhibiting tremendous physical strength while under the influence; these observable facts have been used as a justification for the way suspected drug users are handled.

Poverty & Unemployment

One review noted that a “brief portion of “Modern Times” deals with poor versus rich.¹⁸ We still have the Poor versus Rich Dichotomy. Our attitudes regarding poverty today are similar to the attitudes of people of previous eras. We are intrinsically into labeling. It helps us to cope with the negative plight of some segment in our society are suffering through. The 1900’s belief system blamed the poor for their condition. The ideology of rugged individualism makes people view those not doing well as failures. Their failure must be the result of a character flaw in them. It must be due to something they did or failed to do. Even with bad times everywhere, some will say it is happening to you, not me. It is not going to happen to me.

Tramp’s clumsiness reminds us all that reeducation and training are often necessities to do the simplest of tasks. Also, job opportunities for the unskilled worker have not changed. Many work as night watchmen or as waiters, just as Tramp.

Homelessness

In “Modern Times” Tramp and the gamin orphan girl lived in a little, deserted, ramshackle cabin on the waterfront. The shack looked beautiful.. We find people today living in deplorable conditions and we wonder why. Some people can not afford better accommodations, and having something is often better than having nothing. Homeless or disenfranchised individuals, in our times, often live in abandoned buildings, in cars, in makeshift shanty tents on waterfronts or elsewhere. Some homeless wash themselves or their belongings in open fire hydrants and possibly in nearby streams. In “Modern Times,” Tramp dove into the brackish creek /stream of water for a bath.

Time for Romance?

In our time, many find it appalling that the poor and indigent mate and often bear offspring from those unions. Whether rich or poor, we all desire a significant other to help distract us from our problems, help us deal with our problems, or to be a companion so we are not alone. Once we acknowledge man’s need for love despite his adversity, we can understand that Tramp in the midst of his dilemma could consider romance with the

¹⁸ Marx Van Doren for *The Nation*, v. 142, no. 3685, February 19, 1936, p. 232

gamin, the young orphan girl who steals food to feed her younger siblings after their father was killed.

Criminality

Sometimes conditions make thieves out of people because of their basic need for survival. Teen-age runaways are not a phenomenon unique only in “Modern Times.” Even today, children become orphaned or may find themselves raising themselves, as in “Modern Times,” when a parent is suddenly taken from them. Whether the loss of the parent is due to sudden death by illness (AIDS), accident, or police shooting, the result has the same effect on a child. The child could be placed into the custody of youth authorities. “Modern Times” alludes to the inadequacies and problems of the juvenile system, which still persist today.

The burglars in “Modern Times” were just hungry displaced/unemployed workers from the same mill as Tramp. We all recognize that crime is wrong; however, we all can understand and sympathize with one stealing for survival. In our present modern times, burglary still occurs sometimes for survival, but now mostly to support a drug habit.

Critics

The *Dictionary of Films* saw the themes of “Modern Times” as common to that time. It asserts, “Such was the world of the early Thirties, where an abundance of food and machinery existed alongside starvation and unemployment.”¹⁹ In our time, technology makes us capable of producing more food than we need, but some people still go hungry or have to rely on the generosity of food banks and soup kitchens. Also, full-employment is fiction. Although the unemployment rate may be relatively low, the total population is larger now than the total population in the thirties. The number of people unemployed now would be considered a large number in the thirties.²⁰ Since some of the conditions now are similar to those in the thirties, the *Dictionary of Films* could describe our time using a similar statement, changing only the decade.²¹

¹⁹ George Sadoa, p. 224

²⁰ 66% Unemployment Rate - The percentage of the labor force which is unemployed, calculated according to <http://www.gov.nf.ca/nlwin/LMF/flmurate.htm>

66% Unemployment Rate - represents the fraction of the labor force that is unemployed. It is published monthly in the government's employment report covers also information on payroll jobs, employment, average workweek, average hourly earnings. See

<http://www.stern.nyu.edu/~nroubini/bci/Unemploymentrate.htm>

65% unemployment - refers to the persons (in the labor force) who does not have a job or does not perform any work for payment or profit, but is available for work and is seeking work. See

<http://logic.csc.cuhk.edu.hk/~s976320/unemployment.htm>

²¹ Such was the world of the early Nineties, where an abundance of food and machinery existed alongside hunger and unemployment; or such was the world of the start of the new Millennium, where an abundance of food and machinery existed alongside hunger and unemployment.

“There has been a furor here and there in the press about the social content of “Modern Times.”²² Many of the reviewers of the film expressed the thoughts I had. Chaplin created a biting commentary about civilization. Making fundamentally tragic events humorous enabled Chaplin to build a picture of “Mr. Common Man faced by life.”²³ It was the heroic embodiment of the common man in the figure of the tramp, which involved us deeply and at so many levels ²⁴ and helped Chaplin to present a comic statement of serious matters without perverting the problem into a joke.²⁵ “It is a comedy of poverty.” “It is a poverty of our times, and it is very real.”²⁶

Some critics gave “Modern Times” political significance while others did not. One reviewer said, the theme “Modern Times” is the tragedy of the petty bourgeoisie in capitalist society because it depicts the period of “prosperity.” The period to which the capitalist bards referred to as the “golden dream”-“a heaven on earth that was.” “Modern Times” shows, honestly and truthfully, how the American working class is carrying on a struggle against capitalism. And it also asserts that “Chaplin laughs at the capitalist system of rationalization.”²⁷ Another said, “The Marxists...will claim this as their film, but it is a good deal less and a good deal more than Socialist intention.” “No real political passion has gone to it.” As justification for this view they say Chaplin is an artist and not a propagandist. He does not explain, but presents a fantasy of a tragic world and an inhuman factory. He does not offer political solutions. Nor does Tramp knowingly do ‘what a Socialist man should do’, for he was “dreaming of a steady job and the most bourgeois home.”²⁸

“The “message” of “Modern Times” has been debated at length by critics, some seeing it as a satiric jab at the industrial system, others regarding it mainly as comic entertainment. Although both views are at least partially correct, Chaplin himself has said, “There are those who attach social significance to my work. It has none. I leave such subjects for the lecture platform. To entertain is my first consideration.”²⁹ “The film as a whole means no more than Charlie Chaplin means. Nobody has ever been able to say what that is, but...it is something quite timeless and priceless, and more human than the best of alien words lugged in for definition.”³⁰ Regardless of how it is categorized, “Modern Times” remains one of Chaplin’s most loved and popular films.³¹

Conclusion

²² *New Republic*, February 19, 1936, v. 86, p. 48

²³ Robert Forsythe, *New Masses*, v. 18, February 18, 1936, p. 29-30

²⁴ Charles M. Berg, p. 1137

²⁵ Robert Forsythe, p. 30

²⁶ Hopkinson and Blake, *Lorentz on Film*, NY, 1975, reprinted from *McCall's*, May 1936 p134

²⁷ B. Shumiatski, *New Masses*, v. 16, September 24, 1935, pp. 28-30

²⁸ *Graham Green on Film*, February 1936, reprinted from *The Spectator*, February 14, 1936, p. 52

²⁹ Charles M. Berg, p. 1137

³⁰ Marx Van Doren, *The Nation*, v.141, p. 232

³¹ Charles M. Berg, p. 1137

“Based directly as it was on the world situation in the early Thirties, one might assume that it would later lose some of its forcefulness and sense of actuality. However, when it was re-released in the Fifties, a period of full employment and automation, it had lost none of its freshness. The passing years have only increased its power and affirmed its brilliant structure.”³²

If there was a remake of “Modern Times” now, there would be no shortage of new technology that would make for good footage because it moved quickly and kept the attention of the worker. The themes could all be depicted using existing rush hour footage, food pantry lines, overcrowded prisons, and homelessness.

The comments of the reviewers of the film were very insightful. Looking at the film at the eve/turn of the new millennium, the timeline seems circular; trends appear to repeat themselves. I am thankful for the minimum use of words in “Modern Times.” The semi silence is refreshing. Sometimes we know just what is happening without hearing it. Seeing is believing. Living it makes it known without words.

³² George Sadoa, p. 225

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- 4 George Sadoa, *Dictionary of Films*, Translated and editing by Peter Morris, University of California Press, Berkley, CA, 1965, p. 224-225
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